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My Saviour

OR

DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS

ON THE NAMES AND TITLES OF THE

Lord Jesus Christ.

"My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

BOSTON.

J. E. DOW, PUBLISHER.

THE NEW YORK
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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

My Saviour:

OR

DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS,

IN PROSE AND VERSE,

ON THE NAMES AND TITLES

OF THE

Lord Jesus Christ.

BY THE REV. JOHN EAST, M. A.

RECTOR OF CROSCOMBE, SOMERSET, ENG.

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SEVENTH EDITION.

BOSTON:

JAMES B. DOW, PUBLISHER.

1842.

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AMERICAN EDITOR'S PREFACE.

If any person dislike the old-fashioned doctrine of the proper divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, let him not purchase the ensuing little work, unless he purchase with a desire to read what has been written by one who likes that doctrine. It is a book to be bought and read by those who delight in that "great mystery of godliness, — God manifest in the flesh." Let such purchase and peruse it; it will pay them for their money and for their time. Its author is an eminent Christian, a sacred poet, and a man of no ordinary powers of mind. Yet his book is not an argument, nor a collection of arguments, upon the subjects of which it treats. It is rather a book of exercises in the highest branch of Christian learning. It shows a beautiful, a great, and good mind, breathing out its desires after the object of its supreme love; searching itself

constantly, to see whether its affection be sincere, strong, and always in action; confiding and obedient as a little child in the hands of its parent; and seeking incessantly to ripen in Christian experience, and to grow towards the strength and loveliness of "the perfect man, — towards the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Its author takes it for granted, that there are texts enough in the Bible, *argumentatively* handled, to demonstrate the doctrine that there is one God, existing as revealed in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and, assuming this position, does not hesitate to use, in reference to Christ, a multitude of other texts, not usually brought forward in severe argument on this subject. In fact, he finds Christ every where the great subject of the Bible. Clearly revealed, in numerous texts, as God our Saviour, he sees him shining, with a half-suppressed but still glorious light, through numerous others. His great doctrine clearly established in his own mind by the former, he does not scruple to use it as a key to unlock the true sense, and unfold the rich

treasures, of the latter. All his meditations are rich in thought and spiritual feeling, and many of them specimens of exquisite beauty and finished perfection in this species of composition. The poetry, with which every one closes, has caught the full spirit of our best sacred lyrics. Many of these pieces would make rich additions to our collections of hymns; and all of them would have done, had they been composed in measures proper for psalmody.

On the whole, this American reprint of the English edition must, we think, be hailed with peculiar satisfaction by all who love the religion of the Bible and of the closet, and who, at the same time, can say, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and Eternal Life."

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

SEVERAL authors have written copiously, and some learnedly, on the names and titles of the Lord Jesus Christ. The present volume does not pretend to vie with the writings of a Dyer, a Serle, or a Goode. It takes its own ground, and only offers its humble aid to the plain Christian, who may be inclined to afford it a place in his library, and occasionally to refresh his mind with a few simple and devotional reflections on the glory of that Saviour whose "name is as ointment poured forth." May he, by his Holy Spirit, fulfil his promise to the Church, in the experience both of the reader and the writer: "MY PEOPLE SHALL KNOW MY NAME."

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MY SAVIOUR.

FIRST MEDITATION.

ALPHA AND OMEGA.

My Saviour is "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come." * This title, which — like many others belonging to him — is as remarkable for its condescending simplicity as for its majestic sublimity, occurs only four times in the sacred volume, and that in the Apocalypse of St. John. On each occasion, it is assumed by my Saviour himself. I cannot, therefore, possibly err, in appropriating it to him.

Eternity is the date of his existence. The

* Rev. i. 8

eternal past and the eternal future are his. Though his human nature had its origin, and, as the Son of man, he became an infant of days, yet even that nature is to share the eternal futurity of the Godhead. In my Saviour's will, and through his wisdom and power, all things have their beginning; his glory is their end. For "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." * "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen." † He is that all-comprehensive circle in which the universe lives, and moves, and has its being. In similar language he revealed himself to his ancient people, by his evangelical prophet, Isaiah: "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." ‡ "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me." § "Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and

* John i. 1—3.
† Rom. xi. 36.
‡ Isa. xliv. 6.
§ Isa. xliii. 10.

my right hand hath spanned the heavens." * How perfect is the harmony of Scripture, in its testimony to my Saviour!

Is the Lord Jesus Christ, then, the Alpha and Omega of my soul? Does he hold precedency in my affections? Is he the more than magic circle drawn around my heart, which meets me and is most welcome wherever I turn my eyes? Is he at once the centre and circumference of my happiness, — the point to which all my desires tend, and the limit beyond which they would never stray? If so, I am blest indeed.

This title of my Saviour is thrice adopted by him, in close connection with the prospect and announcement of his second advent. He may occupy the last place in human thought. The roving eye and the vagrant affections of man may now seldom or never rest on him. But, "behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." † O my soul, canst thou answer, "Even so, Amen"? Look, therefore, at the transporting view which the glowing pencil of prophecy has depicted: "I saw a new heaven

* Isa. xlviii. 13. † Rev. i. 7.

and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men; and he will dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." * How certain are my expectations, and what suitable supplies of grace are assured to me in the interim, since he who is the Alpha and Omega of the universe, is also the author and finisher of my faith!

* Rev. xxi. 1—6.

The signs of the days in which I live, and the state of things, both in and out of the church, seem to give new force to the prophetic oracle, —"THE TIME IS AT HAND. Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." * And how can I and my fellow-Christians better employ much of the intermediate time, than in meditation on the names and attributes of him whom we all expect from heaven? † For what are those names and attributes, considered in their relation to us, but so many revelations of the Redeemer's grace and our bliss? Thus occupied, I shall not be filled with consternation when he cometh, whether it be "at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning;" ‡ for I shall lift up my eyes, not upon an unknown judge, from whom I have every thing to dread, but upon a friend, from whom I shall have every thing to hope, and whom I have been accustomed, with humility, yet with affectionate confidence, to call MY SAVIOUR.

* Rev. xxii. 10—13. † Phil. iii. 20. ‡ Mark xiii. 35.

And when I shall have beheld that transforming vision, and thereby shall have been rendered "like him," * he who was the Alpha of my happiness and my hope, will also be its Omega. There never will be a point, even through unlimited eternity, when he will cease to be, or will be less the source of my felicity. I shall behold, in his eternity, the perpetuity of my own existence and my own joys. Lord, let me not incur the guilt of looking short of thee; beyond thee, I cannot look for my enjoyments. While I profess to anticipate in thee and from thee alone the sum total of my future and everlasting happiness, surely I may take thee as my sufficient portion, through the present short life, who art to be the fulness of my joy forever.

MY SAVIOUR! what a theme for mortal tongue!
For never yet hath burning spirit flung
O'er thrilling chord his rapture-waking hands,
To theme so great, 'mid heaven's seraphic bands.
Through the long silence of eternal night,
THOU WAST, enthroned in uncreated light;
Thyself a universe — thyself thine all!
And when, of thy mere goodness, thou didst call

* 1 John iii. 2.

Angelic worlds around thee, sweetly rolled
Their strains o'er harps of pure, ethereal gold.
They sung thee, GOD — creation's fount and end,
Their sovereign Benefactor, Lord, and Friend.
Their HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, pealed around,
Deep echoing through immensity's profound;
Yet none, amidst their shining hosts of light,
E'er hailed thee SAVIOUR! that supreme delight
Reserved for guilty man — for guilty me! —
To sing through time, and through eternity.

SECOND MEDITATION.

ALMIGHTY.

My Saviour is "the Almighty." I have his own high and supreme authority for it, in his revelation of himself to St. John.* He who made all things, and by whom all things consist, has exhausted none of his power by its boundless exercise through eternal ages. He is still able to do all things, — "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him;" and, since he stands engaged by covenant to do all he can for his people, they are secure of having all things effected for them.

Does an aged patriarch, in his hundredth year, feel a rising anxiety as to the accomplishment of God's promises? Is he ready to ask, "How can these things be?" Jehovah appears to him, and says, "I am the Almighty — I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou per-

* Rev. i. 8.

fect." "Let *this* be thy anxiety. Leave my promises to my faithfulness and my omnipotence." Unhappy Balaam knew the Star of Jacob and the Sceptre of Israel by this name; for he "saw the vision of the Almighty." * A believer knows that trial and sorrow are not the work of chance. They are too important links in the chain of sovereign mercy, to be left under any other control than the Lord's. Ruth's pious mother-in-law felt this, when she sorrowfully, though resignedly, said to her friends at Bethlehem, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me; and the Almighty hath afflicted me." †

It is remarkable, that this grand appellation of Jehovah occurs no more than sixty-two times in the Scriptures; and that, of these, one half are in the book of Job. The afflicted patriarch is exhorted not to despise "the chastening of the Almighty,‡ although he felt his very arrows within him, the poison whereof drank up his spirit." He is reminded of the duty of submitting to Jehovah's mysterious dispensations, by the humbling inquiry, "Canst thou find out the

* Num. xxiv. 4. † Ruth i. 20, 21.
‡ *Job* v. 17; vi. 4; xi. 7; xxxvii. 23.

Almighty to perfection?" He is encouraged to cultivate a cheerful repose in the Lord's mercy and righteousness. "Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out; he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice."

Beloved Saviour, my faith regards thee as my only refuge. Thou art "the secret place of the Most High"—the Holy of Holies, where whosoever dwelleth "shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." How unapproachable by any foe, how unassailable by any danger, is my hiding-place in thee! Let me feel and rejoice in my security, and give to thee all the glory of it. Poor, indeed, is my highest praise; but my joyful and exulting hope is, that I shall ere long add my voice to the choir which "rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." And my crown shall lie at thy feet, mingled with their glorious diadems, while I take up their chorus, and cry, with a full heart and a full voice, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."* I seem to catch the melody

* Rev. iv. 8—11.

of that anthem, and the spirit of their praise, while I indulge my longing desire to sing with them "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:" "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." *

Contemplating my Saviour's omnipotence, and my own impotence, together with the power of faith, as a divine principle, I see that life can plunge me into no difficulties by which I need fear to be overwhelmed. For even the "things which are impossible with men, are possible with God." † Faith gives to my weakness the strength of Jehovah. Jesus teaches me this, in his conversation with the afflicted father of the demoniac youth. That father's prayer ran thus: "If thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us." The compassionate Saviour replied, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Thus he seemed, as it were, to transfer the powers of his almighty arm

* *Rev. xv. 3, 4.* † Luke xviii. 27.

to the faith of the supplicant. That supplicant, fearing to lose the benefit he sought through the feebleness of his faith, yet conscious that he did possess real confidence in Christ, exerted the strength which, in the hour of his humility and of his extremity, the Lord infused into his soul. The tears gushed from his streaming eyes, while the exclamation burst from his lips, "Lord, I believe! help thou mine unbelief!" * Faith triumphed over all the difficulties of the case. The child was rescued from the power of Satan. The father was blessed with the fruits of his faith, joy, and peace. O my Saviour, graciously impart to me that faith which shall thus make my feeble soul strong as omnipotence in thy almightiness!

His word omnific was creation's birth:
The star-paved firmament, the verdant earth,
Ocean's vast world of waves, life, spirit, man—
Th' immensity of being was his plan,
His work—MY SAVIOUR'S. And, unwearied still,
He amplifies infinity. His will
The only limit to his potent hand,
The universe is ruled by his command.

* Mark ix. 22—24.

Yet was creation's work a thing of nought,
Compared with the redeeming love that brought
A sin-cursed world back from the dark abyss,
And raised lost heirs of hell to heaven and bliss.
ALMIGHTY! Yes, he proved himself no less,
When on the cross he bore our guiltiness;
Else had he sunk beneath the enormous weight,
For human strength, or angels', far too great.
ALMIGHTY! then his precious blood could give
The law its honor, and let sinners live.
ALMIGHTY! then his word can never fail;
The omnipotence of mercy *must* prevail.
Lord, on thy mighty grace my soul shall rest,
Amidst its weakness, of thy strength possessed.
Nor, till thy arm too shortened is to save,
Will I despair of heaven, or dread the grave.

THIRD MEDITATION.

ANGEL.

My Saviour is the "Messenger" or "Angel of the Covenant," in whom I delight, even the Lord, whom I seek.* This title is a name of office, not of nature. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." † In nature he is infinitely "better than the angels;" ‡ and, in fact, he receives from them the homage which intelligent creatures owe to their Creator, and which it would be the highest treason for them to offer to another. As an equal party in the covenant of redemption, the Son of God assumed the office of Messenger, or Angel of the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, to the guilty children of men; and with the office he also took the name.

In the form of an angelic being, my Saviour frequently appeared to the saints of old, and they

* *Mal. iii.* 1. † Heb. ii. 16. ‡ Heb. i 4.

recognized him under that title as their Guide, their Guardian, and their future Redeemer. Let me look back to a few of the most remarkable visits which he thus paid to his people.

Thy first manifestation of thyself by this form and name, O thou glorious Angel of the covenant, was to a poor, outcast, female servant, as she sat in melancholy solicitude "by a fountain of water in the wilderness of Shur." * She wept, and thou didst observe her tears. She cried, and thou didst hear her lamentations. Thy promises to that lonely wanderer stand good to the prèsent day, and the "wild man" of the Arabian desert bears an unwitting testimony to the veracity of thy word! She recognizes thy divinity, "for she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou, God, seest me!" So, Lord, vouchsafe to observe me, when I weep. Hear the prayer of my affliction when I cry. In all my wanderings here upon earth, may I ever retain, and be at once admonished and cheered by the recollection, that "Thou, God, seest me." Under thy guidance may I always find a fountain in the wilderness, for my support and refreshment, and find thee near to sweeten that fountain, by thy manifested *presence* and thy promises.

* *Gen.* xvi. 7—14.

Wast not thou, O my Saviour, "the Angel who redeemed Jacob from all evil," and whose blessing he devoutly implored upon his grandchildren? * The venerable patriarch knew thee, as his Redeemer, and supremely valued thy blessing, as the richest inheritance for his descendants. Graciously dispose and enable me to contemplate thee in the same relation to myself, and to set the same exalted value upon thy favors for those whom I love, and whom I may have to leave behind me upon earth. I might bequeath them wealth, and might thereby entail upon them a heavy curse. If I leave them under thy blessing, they will have indeed "a goodly heritage." †

And is it not respecting my Saviour, that my faith hears a voice from heaven, saying, as of old to Israel, "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in thy way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared"? ‡ Isaiah thus spake of that period of Israel's history: "So he was their Saviour. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them; in his love and his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." § I am often animated, in

* Gen. xlviii. 16.
† Ps. xvi. 6.
‡ Ex. xxiii. 20.
§ Isa. lxiii. 8, 9.

running the race that is set before me, by the thoughts of the great cloud of angelic witnesses, who surround my course, and "who are sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."* Yet what is this to the assurance that THOU art with me, to be my constant protector, to supply my wants, to uphold my faltering steps, and to conduct me in safety to the Canaan of my final rest? O! give me grace ever most affectionately to revere thee, to obey thy voice, and to follow thy guidance.

The ANGEL JEHOVAH, who once and again appeared unto Manoah and his wife, whose name was "secret" or "wonderful,"† and who did so wondrously in the sacrifice which they offered, was no other than HE whom I love, and address by the endearing title of my Saviour; and who, in the fulness of time, ascended to heaven in the flame of his own sin-offering. In every season of spiritual distress, say, Lord, unto me, as in thy angelic office thou saidst unto agitated Gideon, "Peace be unto thee; fear not; thou shalt not die:"‡ for thou art the angel of life, not of death, to every penitent soul.

* Heb. i. 14. † Isa. ix. 6; Judges xiii. 15—22.
‡ Judges vi. 23.

Mercifully come to me, blessed Angel of t
covenant, and cause me to hear thy gracio
errand — the good news of pardon and justific
tion, of peace and glory, the fruits of thine o
mission and of thine own sufferings. So enga
my soul with this gladdening intelligence, that
may comparatively turn a deaf ear to all besid
Aid and support my drooping soul by thy Spi
In thy almighty hands hold thou me up, and ke
me in all my ways, lest I dash my foot against
stone. I expect not to see the visible splend
of thy presence shine around my path; but if t
word illumine my steps, as the token of t
presence, it shall suffice me. By thee may I
ultimately carried to my heavenly and eter
home, when I shall drop the burden of t
flesh, uttering with my last faint breath, "Lo
Jesus, receive my spirit!" O! unutterable j
and joy forevermore! Methinks the first act
my disimbodied soul will be to embrace thy fe
and hail my deliverer from earth and hell — fr
sin, and death, and woe. Till then, whether
traverse the mighty ocean, or the wide-spre
earth; whether I dwell with the rich in palac
or with the poor in their hovels; in health
sickness; in supposed safety or in evident da

ger; in life and in death,—be this my consolation, that "the Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." *

Where can the wayworn pilgrim roam—
The soul whom earth denies a home,
But angel-legions round him tend,
To comfort, succor, and befriend?
They waft him o'er the stormy deep,
Or strengthen up the mountain-steep;
Amidst ten thousand deaths they shield
His sacred head in war's red field;
And when at last he sinks to rest,
On some fond arm, on some fond breast,
His disencumbered soul they bear,
Life's everlasting crown to wear.
But all their ministries of love,
To draw them from their seats above,
The saints to succor, watch, and guide,
Through earth's dark wilds, or ocean's tide,
Are nothing, to the Saviour's cares
Expended on salvation's heirs.
And will the Lord of glory deign
An angel's office to sustain?

* Ps. xxxiv. 7.

Amazing love — unequalled grace,
To men of Adam's fallen race!
Blest Saviour! since such love is thine,
I gladly all to thee resign:
My every step and thought attend,
And guide and guard me to the end.

FOURTH MEDITATION.

ARM OF THE LORD.

My Saviour is the "Arm of the Lord." Under this title Isaiah invoked the long-tarrying Messiah: "Awake, awake, put on strength, O Arm of the Lord! Awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?" * Now, these were "the redeemed of the Lord." The Arm of the Lord, therefore, which made their way for them, is synonymous with Jehovah, the Redeemer of his people, the Saviour of my soul.

It hath been justly observed, that "God *speaks* in *our* way, but *acts* according to his own." By his arm, then, we are to understand the *extent* of

* Isa. li. 9, 10.

his power; as his *stretched-out arm*, or infinite might, reaches to all things; by his *hand*, the most minute, exact, and perfect workings of that power, which descends to the arrangement of the least of his dispensations equally with the greatest, at once kindling the glimmer of the glow-worm, and the blaze of ten thousand suns, and sustaining alike the movements of seraphs and of babes; "and by his *right hand*, the brightest display of his omnipotence and majesty." If the *finger* of God,* or the least exertion of his strength, could create the heavens, who can prescribe bounds to the reach of his ARM, or what is impossible to the *strength* of his divine *right hand*? But these terms do not merely imply the omnipotence of Jehovah; they frequently signify JEHOVAH himself; so that I am fully justified in declaring that the ARM OF THE LORD is my Saviour.

Thus Moses, in his book of divine reminiscences, told Israel well to remember the mighty HAND, and stretched-out ARM, whereby the Lord their God brought them out of Egypt† — an office which I have seen to have been discharged by the Angel of the Lord, the Saviour of the world.

* Ps. viii. 3. † Deut. vii. 8.

For, says the Psalmist, "thou hast with thine ARM redeemed thy people,"* and I well know by whom alone this was or could be effected. Of whom, again, does Isaiah speak, in that remarkable portion of his prophecies, which he seems to have written as on Mount Calvary, in view of the bleeding cross? Of whom can he speak but of my Saviour, when, with impassioned energy and sorrow, he asks, "To whom is the ARM of the Lord revealed?"† He can mean no other than the divine and glorious personage who "was wounded for our transgressions, who poured out his soul unto death, who was stricken for the transgression of his people." The same prophet tells us, "that the Lord hath sworn by his RIGHT HAND, and by the ARM of his STRENGTH,"‡ in confirmation of his promises to his people. But "as he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself;"§ and therefore we see all the engagements of God established in Christ.

"Not only the *power* and Godhead of Christ are revealed under the denomination of JEHOVAH'S HAND, but also the MEDIATION of Christ

* Ps. lxvii. 15.
† *Isa. liii. 1.*
‡ Isa. lxii. 8.
§ Heb. vi. 13.

between Jehovah and his people. A HAND, or arm, is the instrument or mean of communication; and this Christ is to his people: he reaches out and takes from the divine fulness, and deals of it unto every one of them, according to his respective need." What other arm could raise itself so high or let itself down so low?

On this ARM OF THE LORD, it is at once my privilege and my duty to lean. On an arm of flesh I dare not rest, for God has most solemnly anathematized such confidence. For "thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." * On him I may repose, in full assurance that he will never fail me. The Church in her pilgrimage state is thus beautifully described, in the question of an admiring spectator: "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" † Numerous, very numerous, are the occasions on which I have need of such an omnipotent support. In them all I am certified of obtaining it. Does sickness lay me low, and press my aching body on the couch of disease and pain? Well, I hear this encouraging oracle from heaven: "There

* Jer. xvii. 5. † Cant. viii. 5.

is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." * Does "the strong man armed" assail me? My Saviour is stronger than he, and, having already overcome him for me, will overcome him in me. Are my iniquities, my besetting sins, my native corruptions, too powerful for me? He has undertaken to "subdue" them. Is the fear of man formidable to me? I may say to myself and to my companions in tribulation, what Hezekiah said to his subjects on Sennacherib's approach — "With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles." † Am I sunk to the lowest depth of temporal distress? Have the severest of earthly calamities plunged me into an abyss of misery, from which I am tempted to doubt whether there is any possibility of deliverance? A voice of hope reaches me even there. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." ‡ Is the last enemy at hand, and does my timid nature shrink from the final struggle? That last

* Deut. xxxiii. 26, 27. † Chron. xxxii. 8. ‡ Isa. lix. 1.

enemy is to be destroyed. I have to encounter him by a better arm than my own, and one which assures me of success. I may meet him with the shout of anticipated triumph—"O, sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his RIGHT HAND, and his HOLY ARM hath gotten him the victory." *

Is there a depth so deep, a height so high,
A distance so remote, but thy RIGHT HAND,
That spans with ease the world-empeopled sky,
And holds within its palm the sea and land,
The fugitive that flees from thy command,
Can grasp and chasten; or the child of woe,
That trembles, as the reed-leaf on the strand,
Where tempests thunder, and the torrents flow,
Can reach, and soothe, and save from all he dreads below?

ARM OF THE LORD! once on the cross outspread
In mortal pangs; by thee, o'er heaven's broad plain,
The Godhead's regal sceptre now is swayed,
And all the hosts of glory own thy reign;
Nor there uplifted dost thou plead in vain,
In thine high-priesthood's interceding grace,
For thy redeemed, the purchase of thy pain,

* Ps. xcviii. 1.

The fallen and guilty, but high-honored race,
Whom thou hast snatched from wrath to see thy glorious face.

Arm of the Lord! awake — awake — arise!
Display and magnify thy glorious might:
O, scatter from earth's bounds thine enemies;
By once uplifting, put their throngs to flight,
And hurl from his dark throne the prince of night!
Raise o'er a prostrate world thy banner, — Peace;
Assert to every heart thy sovereign right;
From sin's hard thrall each captive soul release,
And bid the reign of crime, of guilt, and sorrow, cease!

FIFTH MEDITATION.

THE BELOVED.

My Saviour is the Beloved of the Father and of his people. By this affectionate appellation he was spoken of by Jehovah, or by the prophet in his name, when the sad "song" of the unfruitful vineyard was set to Isaiah's harp. "Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved, touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill; and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it; and also made a wine-press therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes; and it brought forth wild grapes." *

My Saviour, is my soul a part of such a vineyard to thee? Does thy hand, instead of receiving with a gracious smile the sweet fruits of

* Isa. v. 1—7.

thine own culture, have to reject the sour and unwelcome produce of my negligence and sin? Pardon, Lord, thy ungrateful servant, and take my soul wholly under thy management; lest, deprived of its safeguard and its cultivation, like ancient Israel, it should lie "waste," unfruitful, unblessed, and desolate.

Did ever Jordan's banks, or Judea's wilderness, echo to so delightful a sound as when, at my Saviour's baptism, mingled with the gentle murmur of the descending Holy Dove, there came "a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"? * That voice was not sent more to comfort and animate the incarnate Son of God, in the arduous work on which he was entering, than to cheer and encourage his people to live "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." † In this view, every term of love employed by the Father towards the Son, is fraught with joyful considerations to the believer. "Accepted in the Beloved!" How rich, full, and unchangeable, then, must my acceptance be! I thereby become a partaker of a divine nature, ‡ am invested

* Matt. iii. 17. † Eph. i. 6. ‡ 2 Pet. i. 4.

with a divine righteousness, and share in t
divine love. I am beloved in the Beloved.

David was an eminent type of Christ, both
his history and his name, which signifies "I
loved." The prophetic Scriptures announc
the Son of David, under his illustrious fore
ther's name. This name is dear to the Jew
people; and it will be still dearer to them, wh
on their conversion to Christ, Hosea's wo
shall be fulfilled — "Afterward shall the childr
of Israel return, and seek the LORD their G
and DAVID their king; and shall fear the L
and his goodness in the latter days." * Ezek
spake of Messiah by the same royal title.†

"The Beloved" of his Father is the belov
of his saints, — the beloved of his church, and
every individual member of it. This is beau
fully exhibited in the Song of Songs, which is
inspired, poetical description of the mutual l
of Christ and his church, borrowed from
chaste intercourse of wedded life. An infi
world, whether Jewish or Gentile, "seeing
beauty in him to desire him," ‡ may scornfu
ask the church — "What is thy Beloved m

* Hos. iii. 5.

† Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24; xxxvii. 24, 25.

‡ Isa. liii. 2.

than another beloved?"* Her reply is this—"As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons.† My beloved Saviour excels others as much as the rich and fruitful tree excels those which are barren and unfruitful. 'My Beloved is the chiefest among ten thousand;'‡ 'Yea, he is altogether lovely.' This is my Beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."§ Friendship leans upon its fondest object, and looks there for comfort, support, and sympathy, amidst the inevitable griefs of life. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?"|| Who, but the church? Who, but the soul, resting in full confidence upon the love, strength, and sympathy of the Lord Jesus Christ?

If the Redeemer stands thus related to me, I may find a never-failing treasury of joy in this title that he bears. He is, then, the Beloved of my soul; and I may exclaim again and again, in all the ecstasy of self-appropriating affection, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his."¶ His love to me is the source of mine to him; and my love to him is an evidence and seal of his to

* Cant. v. 9. ‡ Cant. v. 10. || Cant. viii. 5.
† Cant. ii. 3; v. 10. § Cant. v. 16. ¶ Cant. ii. 16.

me. That he is mine, by my deliberate, and renewed, and fixed choice, assures me that I am his, and his unalienably and forever. All he is and all he has is mine also; for the heavenly Bridegroom makes over himself and his all to his church. And dare I, can I, would I, withhold any thing from him? Forbid it, O my Saviour, and bring me to make as unreserved a surrender of myself to thee, as thou hast made of thyself to me. "For I am my Beloved's, and his desire is towards me."* It was the "desire" to save me, and to glorify himself by my love to him, above all other objects, that refreshed his soul in death.† Yet a little while, and his gracious benevolence shall be fully gratified in my complete salvation; and when, admitted into his presence, I shall lose sight of all besides in the vision of his glory, then will he never have to complain of my lukewarmness,‡ nor I have to lament the sensible withdrawment of his favor, through unbelief and sin. I may well, therefore, earnestly long for the arrival of his appointed time, when he shall come to take me home to himself, and vent the desires of my heart in the language of the church, both under the Old and

* Cant. vii. 10. † Isa. liii. 11. ‡ Rev. iii. 16.

New Testament dispensations. While I continue here, may I thus express the sincere and ardent desires of my heart for the influences of the Holy Spirit: "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden," — the garden of my soul, — "that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my Beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." * And in the anticipation of eternity, may this be my daily prayer — "Make haste, my Beloved" † Saviour. Thou sayest to thy church, "Surely I come quickly. Amen." My soul replies, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." ‡

Beloved Saviour! can there be
A worm on earth that loves not thee?
O! could the meanest reptile see,
'T would surely try to rival me.

The very rocks that bound the shore,
Nor feel nor hear the seas that roar,
Could they but know thee, would adore,
And strive than me to love thee more.

O! break this stony heart, and raise
This reptile soul to speak thy praise:

* Cant. iv. 16. † Cant. viii. 14. ‡ Rev. xxii. 20.

Beloved Lord, reveal thy face,
And win my heart by love's free grace.

Beloved Saviour! speed the day,
When, borne from sin and earth away,
My soul shall hail thy love's display,
And ever in thy presence stay.

SIXTH MEDITATION.

BRANCH.

My Saviour is "the Branch of the Lord,—beautiful and glorious."* His beauty is the beauty of holiness. His glory is without parallel, because it is divine. As a branch emanates from the tree, and is one with it, so the Son of God, in his superior nature, "came forth from the Father," and is "one" with him. He spreads over heaven and earth, filling both with his glory, and affording to the children of men the fruits of life eternal.

In reference to his human nature, our Lord was to proceed from David; and at a time when the family of that monarch should be in a state of the most abject poverty and obscurity. "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground,"†—as a scion, or sapling from a tree, which has been cut

* *Isa. iv. 2.* † Isa. liii. 2.

down level with the earth, but whose root is still left in the ground. Yet, though he would thus appear to the world as a feeble and undesirable plant, "like the palm-tree, he would flourish under the greatest oppression; and, however laden with his people's sins, would shoot up, and rise superior to all the incumbent load." The event has been so.

My Saviour came forth as a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and as "a BRANCH grew out of his roots;"* he "stands for an ensign of the people; to him the Gentiles have sought; and his rest," since the hour when he exclaimed, "It is finished!" has been "glorious." Blessed Lord! thy character and work have most exactly corresponded with the descriptions previously given by thine own prophets; and it is now most delightful to the reflecting mind to compare the language of prediction with that of history. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David A RIGHTEOUS BRANCH; and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute justice and judgment in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely," and, as it were, under his protect-

* Isa. xi. 1.

ing shade; "and this is his name, whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." * All the merely natural branches of David's line were partakers of their progenitor's guilt; being, like him, shapen in iniquity, and conceived and born in sin. He, however, who preëminently bears the title of the Son of David, was a RIGHTEOUS BRANCH, in himself most perfect; and, moreover, the RIGHTEOUSNESS of his believing people, whereby they are freely, fully, and forever justified.

Am I by faith united to this living and glorious Branch — this true Vine? Then am I also a partaker of the divine nature, by the imputation of a divine righteousness, and by the communication of a new and divine life to my soul. Let me never lose sight of my Lord's admonition — "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without (or *separate from*) me, ye can do nothing." †

From the pen of the prophet Zechariah, also,

* *Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.* † John xv. 4, 5.

I find two prophecies of my Saviour, under the figure and name of the BRANCH. The one foretold him to the servant of Jehovah; the other predicted, in the clearest language, his manhood and his Godhead. In the former vision, the Lord thus spake of the promised Redeemer—"Behold, I will bring forth my servant, the BRANCH;"* and in the latter he said, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord: and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."†

O Saviour! graciously fulfil thy mission, by placing me as a lively stone in that spiritual temple which thou hast undertaken to erect, and of which thou art the sure foundation-stone. To thee, even to thee, belongs the whole glory of the structure. Whatever instruments are employed, thou art the Architect and Builder, whose name it is to bear. Thou hast borne the charge, and the pains, and the shame, attendant

* Zech. iii. 8. † Zech. vi. 12, 13.

upon thy great work, and thou shalt "bear the glory." "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," indeed, awaits me as built up on thee a lively stone; but this is not the glory of *praise*. It is the glory of beauty, and excellence, and holiness, reflected from thee, who, as the light of the heavenly temple, will forever shine thereon, without a veil or cloud. Thou hast ascended to thy throne, and there art now seated as the kingly Ruler, and interceding Priest of thy people. Lord, rule in and over me. Mercifully grant me an interest in thine intercession. By thine Almighty Spirit, be pleased to impart to me a clear and appropriating view of "the counsel of peace between" the Father and thee. Shade, and shelter, and refresh me with thy sweet fruit, O thou ever-living, all-beauteous, and all-glorious BRANCH! until I shall be weary and hungry no more forever.

BRANCH OF THE LORD! the tender shoot,
That sprang from David's withered root,
In Bethl'hem's arid ground;
Who, that beheld thy lowly birth,
Amidst the poorest sons of earth,
Thy regal glory found?

But, as the oak-buds swell and rise,
'Till, midway between earth and skies,
They fling their might abroad,
And cover, 'neath their cool retreat,
The fainting flocks in summer's heat, —
Wast thou, great Son of God!

For now, o'er plain, and hill, and glade,
Thy saving strength extends its shade,
And welcomes all to rest;
And soon, throughout the world's vast whole,
From India's deserts to the pole,
In thee shall all be blest.

I come, my Saviour, — come to thee;
From sin, and wrath, and hell I flee:
The tempest still is rife;
But through thy sheltering, healing leaves,
Nor thunderbolt nor lightning cleaves,
Thou deathless Tree of Life!

SEVENTH MEDITATION.

BREAD.

My Saviour is "the Bread of Life." I have it on no doubtful authority. I have it on his own. For "Jesus said unto them" who heard him in the days of his flesh, and he now says unto us, by his holy word, "I am the bread of life." *

When my first parents yielded to a sinful appetite, — excited in them by the father of lies, — and partook of the forbidden fruit, they reduced themselves and their children to a state of spiritual destitution, too aptly pictured by starvation. The soul, by nature and habit estranged from God, is in a starving and perishing condition. Under these circumstances, the Lord mercifully interposed between man and the penalty of his own violated law. He provided for man's entire relief and preservation, and gave a fore-

* John vi. 35.

taste of his ample purposes of grace, in exceeding rich and precious promises, and also in the expressive types of the Mosaic ceremonial law. There were not wanting striking events also in the history of his ancient people, which emblematically set forth the provision made for the spiritual wants of man.

In the tabernacle and temple, the officiating priest every Sabbath placed twelve loaves of bread upon the golden altar before the Lord, which were called "the shew-bread," * or bread of the presence. "And since part of the frankincense put upon the bread was to be burnt on the altar for a memorial, i. e. of the bread, even *an offering made by fire* unto the Lord; and since Aaron and his sons were to eat it in the holy place, it is evident that this bread typified Christ, first presented as a sacrifice to Jehovah, and then becoming spiritual food to such as *in* and *through* him are *spiritual priests* to God, even his Father."

That shew-bread, always on the golden table, typically interceded for sinners. My Saviour ever liveth to make intercession for me: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made

* Ex. xxv. 30.

with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."* By faith, I may still feed on him in my heart with thanksgiving, especially in my commemoration of his great sacrifice, when I "take and eat bread in remembrance that Christ died for me."

The miraculous supply of the Israelites with manna in the wilderness, was sufficiently wonderful, considered merely as a display of almighty power and goodness. "He satisfied them with the bread of heaven." "He commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven, and rained down manna upon them to eat, and gave them of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels' food."† All this, however, was designed to bring Christ before the soul, and typified the more than angels' food, which the famished soul will find in the Lord Jesus. He himself has established this fact beyond doubt or controversy, in his discourse with the Jews. Let me meditate on that discourse, and feed upon its precious truths!

The Jews referred to the divine gift of manna, and asked our Lord to give a sign, in testimony

* *Heb. ix. 24.* † Ps. lxxviii. 25.

of his own authority, equal or superior to that which Moses had given to their fathers, respecting his mission. Jesus denies that Moses gave them that bread from heaven. It was the gift of God, and prefigured "his unspeakable gift;" for which, O my soul, render unto him thy most ardent thanks. "My Father giveth you the true Bread from heaven. For the Bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."* Ah! my Saviour, teach me to cry with intelligent fervor, "Lord, evermore give me this bread!" It is life which my soul wants; life which thou alone canst afford, and thou alone canst maintain. And didst thou not come that we "might have life, and have it more abundantly"? Feed me, then, with thyself; and, as a living person, in renovated health, craves for the best bread, and a large supply of it, so may I hunger after thee, and by thee be filled, while I delightedly contemplate the glorious perfections of thy person and thine offices. I hear thee say, "I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger." Lord, I come to thee; "O *satisfy* me with thy mercy." Excite and keep up in me a constant desire and

* John vi. 32, 33.

relish for thee, as the nourishment of my soul. Thus shall my meditation of thee be sweet. Thus shall I have the witness within me that I am drawn to thee by the Father; and that, believing on thee, I *have* everlasting life,—a life commenced in my soul now, and to continue forever. For hast thou not added, "If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever"?

While others stumble at thy word, and complain of its mysterious character, may I, taught by thy Holy Spirit, O Lord, receive it in simplicity, and take much delight therein. I would know by experience the veracity of thy declaration—"He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." As to those who were fed by manna, they are dead. Their carcasses fell in the wilderness, smitten by the wrath of God. No condemnation awaits the believer who feeds on "the true Bread from heaven." No death can reach his life. To him thou "wilt give to eat of the hidden manna,"* through his pilgrimage on earth; and at last conduct him safely into that better Canaan, where he "shall hunger no more."†

* Rev. ii. 17. † Rev. vii. 16.

Bread of heaven! once more descending,
Come, my fainting soul to feed;
Health and life, together blending,
Meet in thee, "the living Bread."
O! my Saviour,
Now thy board of plenty spread.

While in faith thy saints, attending,
Here thy death's memorials take,
Angels, o'er the table bending,
Gaze — admire — but ne'er partake:
No such banquet
Sinless spirits ever make.

Angels' food! They taste — adoring —
Immortality's own tree:
Richer food I eat — imploring —
Feeding, O my God, on THEE.
"Bread of God,"
Nourish, strengthen, comfort me.

Though the fig-tree may not blossom,
Nor the vine its cluster yield,
Nor the olive fill my bosom,
Nor the harvest crown my field, —
Can I perish,
With a Saviour's love revealed?

No, ah! no; avaunt! repining;
He is more than flock or herd:
'Midst all earthly stores declining,
Still my Saviour's voice is heard —
"I'll supply thee,
While depending on my word."

EIGHTH MEDITATION.

COUNSELLOR.

My Saviour is my Counsellor* and Advocate. This is one of the titles which made up his complex name of Wonderful, the name assigned to him by prophecy, and illustrated by the entire scheme of providence and grace. He is one of the Triune council, who are represented as deliberating upon the creation and redemption of man; a counsellor of Jehovah; and also a divine person in Jehovah. "Who," asks the prophet Isaiah,—"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding?"† Yes, who but a person truly and essentially divine, could sustain such an office as this?

* Isa. ix. 6. † Isa. xl. 13.

With what love, admiration, and reverence, therefore, may I look upon my Saviour, when I consider him as sustaining the exalted office of Counsellor in all the plans and operations of the Godhead! In heaven and in earth he says, — and facts confirm his veracity, — "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding; I have strength." * The false wisdom, indeed, which prevails in the understanding of the natural mind, — a wisdom first acquired under the violated tree of knowledge, and ever since fed by the father of lies, who then gave it unto man, — may and does esteem the plan of salvation to be folly. Hence nations and individuals "have rejected the counsel of God against themselves," † and "judged themselves unworthy of eternal life." ‡ But the heaven-taught soul, which has learned that first lesson of true wisdom, its own ignorance, discerns in the gospel of Christ the perfection of wisdom and counsel, and in the person of the great Mediator, the glorious Counsellor — "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." § It is in his hand, that "the kingdom," of which I desire to be, and humbly trust I am, a

* Prov. viii. 14.
† *Luke vii. 30.*
‡ Acts xiii. 46.
§ 1 Cor. i. 24.

subject, is "ordered and established with judgment and with justice from henceforth and forever." * There is not a transaction in that kingdom, or the subordinate kingdoms of nature and providence, in which I may not trace the design and agency of my Saviour, and say, "This also cometh from the Lord of Hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Most consolatory reflection! Taught by thee, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." I may form the best plans, and adopt the best means for their execution, according to my own judgment, and yet I may fail; for, while "a man's heart deviseth his way, the Lord directeth his steps." May this set my mind at rest — the assurance, that, in the council-chamber of the skies, where all earthly and human affairs are arranged, the wonderful Counsellor of Jehovah is my Saviour.

Shall I take the name of Counsellor in the sense of a *special pleader*? Such an Advocate have I at the bar of heaven, in the person of Jesus Christ the righteous. I am guilty. I can make no self-defence. I have no personal plea

* Isa. ix. 7.

to put in. But I read — "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins." * Can I do better, can I do any other, than leave my cause in his hands? What ground of fear is left me, while I have such a Counsellor? How can I fail of being justified, when my Advocate can point to himself and say — "I have borne the sinner's guilt, and penalty, and shame. My blood is the propitiation for his soul. My righteousness is his title to more than an acquittal — to the complete justification of his person — even to an inheritance of joy unspeakable and full of glory." In every hour of spiritual depression, may my heavenly Advocate at least strengthen me to say unto him, in the calm confidence of faith — "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." †

I may also view this title of my Saviour as denoting his ability and will to be the *adviser* of his people. He will not only consult for me, but he will likewise give me the best advice. "I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings. For I beheld, and there was no man; even among them, and there was no counsellor, that,

* *1 John ii. 1, 2.* † Isa. xxviii. 14.

when I asked of them, could answer a word."* Jehovah, therefore, became the Counsellor of his people. Though a man may at first approach him with as much shyness as did Nicodemus, or, with the Greeks, as it were, desire only to see him, he will yet graciously welcome him. "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way."† Has he given to me this fruit of his Holy Spirit, "meekness"? Has he effectually taught me that lesson of his pure word, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths"?‡ How securely may I then commit myself to his guidance, whether it be in my search after truth, in the path of daily duty, or in the frequent perplexities of the present life! He has promised his blessed Spirit as my guide into all truth; to guide me continually; to make me, as a sheep of his flock, "lie down in green pastures, and to lead me beside the still waters."§ I am interested in that most comprehensive covenant made with

* Isa. xli. 28.
† Psalm xxv. 8, 9.
‡ Prov. iii. 5, 6.
§ Psalm xxiii. 2.

"the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One," on behalf of his ransomed — "They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them." *

How vast thy counsels — how profound!
Eternal God, thou Sovereign Mind!
Within no measured, narrow bound
Thy perfect wisdom is confined:
For thee the universe is far too small;
Thou art thyself thine own sufficient all.

Creation! deep, mysterious plan,
One mirror of thy glory shines:
What seraph can its wonders scan,
Or fathom out its endless lines?
Yet wherefore made? Thy fulness felt no need: —
Goodness alone the mighty whole decreed.

My Saviour had his equal share
In ordering that stupendous birth:

* Isa. xlix. 9, 10.

His fond delight for ages were
With us, the destined sons of earth:
Through the long-past eternity he planned,
And loved the offspring of his plastic hand.

But shallow was creation's scheme,
Compared with mercy's purposed love:
Here flowed thy wisdom's amplest stream,
Full-bursting from thy throne above,
When Justice cried, with wrath-enkindled eye,
"Man, guilty, hapless man, the death must die!"

Dear Counsellor, that awful hour
Beheld thee stand 'twixt me and hell:
O for an angel's tongue of power,
Thine advocating grace to tell!
Redemption makes thy glorious works complete,
For there thy justice and thy mercy meet.

NINTH MEDITATION.

THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS.

My Saviour is the Desire of all nations. Thus spake the prophet Haggai, concerning the expected Saviour of men — "The Desire of all nations shall come." * He was promised to the mother of mankind, as in a peculiar sense her seed, and the mighty deliverer of her children from the thraldom of Satan. He was promised to Abraham as a source of blessing to all nations — to all the families of the earth. The father of the faithful, and all who trod in his steps, contemplated his future advent with generous exultation, knowing that it would be the opening of heaven's gate to men of every clime and every tongue. The sweet singer of Israel often struck his harp in harmony with a song of universal benevolence. When he implored mercy and blessing, and the light of God's countenance, for him

* Haggai ii. 7.

and his people, he looked from Mount Sion round the whole world, and prayed, "That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy." * David looked far beyond his own beloved Solomon, even to his own Son and Lord, when he foretold, that "All kings should fall down before him: all nations should serve him;"—"that all nations should call him blessed." †

Among the heathen, some traditional notices of the world's Redeemer prevailed very generally, and were to be found in the narratives of history, and the fables of poetry. Their wisest men sighed for the opening of the windows of heaven, to pour light upon the universal darkness. How many, it is probable, have resembled the interesting Burman female, Mah Men-la, whose little history is recorded in the Life of the late Mrs. Judson! For ten years had her mind sought, with an anxiety nearly amounting to distraction, a satisfactory knowledge of the origin of all things, and of innumerable other points connected with that primary question, before a tract, written by Mr.

* Ps. lxvii. 2. † Ps. lxxii. 11—17.

Judson, gave her the first clear notion of an eternal God. There is a *desire*, inseparable, it should seem, from the very essence of an immortal spirit, after something, which it feels necessary to its happiness, and which eludes its search, wherever that search is directed. This desire, debased by the fall, seeks, but never finds, satisfaction in earthly and polluted things; and, though it cannot reach the full possession of its object, — for

Our very wishes give us not our wish, —

yet, until the soul is taught from above, it turns with aversion from Him, who in his own person and work is alone and altogether what the soul wants.

But do not the enterprising men, who in the present day have gone forth amongst the nations of the earth, make known to us a state of feeling — a preparedness of mind for the written, or the preached word of the Lord, which remarkably justifies this appellation of my Saviour, and looks to him, though unseen and unknown, more truly than the needle in every clime points to the polar star? O! let me rejoice in any opportunity that presents itself of helping to draw aside the

veil which for thousands of years has concealed this object from the view of men. Shall all nations desire Him whom I know, and desire in vain, while I possess to any extent the means of making him known to them? Alas! if I thus act, my love to him is the pretence of hypocrisy, and my benevolence towards mankind is affectation.

And, while He is, or ought to be, and shall be, "the Desire of all nations," can he be less than "the Desire" of my soul? Can any sinner need him more than I do? Can any satisfaction short of him fill my breast? Is the day hastening on upon the rapid wings of light, when Jesus will be THE DESIRE — the paramount — the all-comprehensive Desire of all nations? Then let me earnestly implore such an outshedding of divine influence upon my heart, that all the desires, yea, all the capacities of desire in my soul, may centre in Him, who is "the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." For what object in the universe has a claim upon my desires, in comparison with the Lord Jesus Christ? O that my heart may be drawn after him with an intensity of desire which nothing else shall be *able to* abate, to divert, or to satisfy, even for a

moment, until I see him, embrace him, and exclaim, in a much fuller sense than the Patriarch used the words, when he heard of Joseph, "IT IS ENOUGH." *

Then will the sentiment of the inspired Proverbialist be completely verified — "When the desire cometh, it is a tree of life." † The indulgence of irregular desire ‡ led to the forfeiture of the tree of life in the first paradise. The encouragement of spiritual desire after my Saviour, will lead me to the full enjoyment of "the tree of life" § in the second paradise. Indeed, the state of the believer on earth is always that of *desire*, rather than of *attainment*. In heaven, this will be completely gratified, and the attainments of the soul will be commensurate with, and even largely exceed, its more expanded and ardent desires. In the interim, since the character of my desires is really the character of my spiritual condition, let me, by prayer and the habitual exercise of faith, live in communion with those who say, "The desire of our souls is to thy name and to the remembrance of thee." ||

* Gen. xlv. 23.
† Prov. xiii. 12.
‡ Gen. iii. 6.
§ Rev. xxii. 2.
|| Isa. xxvi. 8.

Ah! whence that soothing sound that came
So soft, yet burthening the wind?
It kindles, like some latent flame,
The ardent longings of my mind.
It is the Spirit's voice,
Still as the evening breeze,
Just sighing through the trees,
Breathing celestial joys:
It fills me with unwonted fire,
With tender, strong, yet pure desire.

But say, my restless, beating heart,
What object draws thy soaring thought,
That thou with worlds wouldst freely part,
And deem thy purchase cheaply bought?
Jesus, my Saviour God!
Him my touched soul desires;
His are these bosom fires,
Panting to sound abroad
The name he bears — the love he shows —
The grace that from his bounty flows.

The Indian turns his pensive eye
In silence to the azure deep;
Or glances at the crimson sky,
Or where his fathers' ashes sleep:
A sigh escapes his breast,
The tear begins to flow,

And fond desire to glow:—
He sighs — he weeps for rest.
"Ah! who can point — who tell me where
My soul may flee to shun despair?

"The God who framed yon lamp of light,
And filled that ocean with its flood;
That garnished o'er the vault of night,
And satisfies our tribes with food,
Where is he? tell me where!
I'll rush through flood and flame
To learn his unknown name;—
Where is he? tell me where!
Creation's universal Lord!
O! speak one word — one beam afford!"

He will — he will, lone child of sighs;
Thou shalt not long for light in vain;
E'en now his angel cleaves the skies,
To waft thy teachers o'er the main.
DESIRE OF NATIONS, hear!
The world awaits thy day;
O! hasten on thy way
To dry the mourner's tear.
The many crowns *shall* deck thy brow,
And every knee in homage bow.

TENTH MEDITATION.

ELECT.

My Saviour is the Elect of God: he is the Elect of my soul; and I am elect in him.

My Saviour is the Elect of God. Let me observe how solemnly the Lord, by his prophet, declared this, and claimed attention to the declaration. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine ELECT, in whom my soul delighteth." * I cannot be mistaken in applying this to my Saviour, because an inspired evangelist has authorized the application.† The Lord Jesus Christ is the Elect of God, in his covenant relation to his church. Chosen from eternity, as the head of a body of redeemed sinners, through whom eternal glory was to accrue to the Godhead, he was the object of Jehovah's entire delight. His being thus the Elect and the delight of God, manifests the perfection of his fitness for the work he was

* Isa. xlii. 1. † Matt. xii. 18.

to accomplish. The unerring wisdom of the divine mind could not be mistaken in the choice of its agent; nor could that agent be otherwise than fully adapted to its purposes.

My Saviour has, indeed, been "despised and rejected of men."* It was predicted that he should be so; and the accomplishment of this, as well as every other prediction respecting the chosen one of God, proves that Jesus was that chosen one. "Wherefore also it is contained in the Scriptures, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, ELECT, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe, he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient."†

But is the Lord Jesus precious to my soul? Has he made me willing to obey his word, and to take him as the corner-stone of my hopes and my happiness? Has he given me a unity of will and choice with the Father, to whom he has reconciled me? I am, then, privileged to say,

* *Isa. liii. 3.* † 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7, 8.

"Behold my Saviour! mine ELECT, in whom my soul delighteth." Let me be watchful and careful to keep up in my soul a sense of his supreme value, that so my delight in him may not be as the rapture of passion, or the glow of imagination, but the settled habit of my soul. Nor let me be less anxious about the character of other objects on which I may fix my choice. These must be chosen and delighted in subordinately to my Saviour.

And is not the fact of Christ being the Elect and delight of my renewed heart, an evidence that I am elect of God in him? Has he not said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you?" Is not my choice of him a result of his choice of me? He has an elect people. They are elect in him; and, for his sake, the Lord delighteth in them. O my Saviour! what privileges are mine, since thou art mine! May I ever show my sense of their inestimable worth, by the holiness of my walk and conversation, since thy people are "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." *

* 1 Pet. i. 2.

O happy day, that fixed my choice
On thee, my Saviour and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad.

O happy bond, that seals my vows
To him who merits all my love!
Let cheerful anthems fill his house,
And echo through his courts above.

'Tis done; the great transaction's done:
I am my Lord's, and he is mine:
He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to obey the voice divine.

Now rest, my long-divided heart;
Fixed on this blissful centre, rest:
With ashes who would grudge to part,
When called on angels' bread to feast?

High Heaven, that heard the solemn vow,
That vow, renewed, shall daily hear,
Till in life's latest hour I bow,
And bless in death a bond so dear.

ius sang and thus felt that eminently holy man
God, — Dr. Doddridge. His whole life, even
om childhood, manifested that Christ was the
lect of his soul, — the supreme delight of his

affectionate nature. He has been with the object of his love for near a century, and is constantly discovering fresh manifestations of the Redeemer's excellence. Let me pour out my admiration of the Lord Jesus Christ in sacred verse. My pen may, indeed, in vain attempt to rival his; but, when I meet him in glory, my voice shall not be inferior to his, in Emanuel's praise.

It was not that Eternal Mercy saw
A choice of agents, in redemption's plan,
That, after balance due of varying claims,
He fixed upon his everlasting Son,
To work that wondrous scheme into effect.
No need had he to ponder o'er the roll
Of heaven's nobility, — in council close
T' inquire through all the innumerable host
Of high, angelic peerage, to discern
If a created arm could undertake
The labor infinite of saving man.
Could they have merged their merit and their power
In one great master-spirit, then, even then,
All vain had been their love and their attempt;
Vain as the effort of an infant hand
Some mountain to upheave and reinstate,
O'er whose sunk mass old ocean deeply rolls.
The dread alternative lay here — between
Man's total, irrecoverable doom,

And death transferred to Deity itself.
God chose, as man, for man to die the death.
And who but man impeaches the resolve?
Hear it amazed, ye heavens! and thou, earth,
Tremble from thy deep centre to the poles:
The only being that disputes the choice
Is man — infatuate, besotted man!
Celestials in its praise attune their harps,
And demons gnash their malice at its power. —
Ah! once I saw no wisdom in it too;
Though I admired its love, and wondered oft
What principle of rigid justice could
A compensation so immense demand.
Now, one bright beam thrown downward on the law,
And one upon the manger and the cross,
And both reflected on my prostrate soul,
Unveils the truth, and justifies the choice.
Not light itself so fitted to the orb
Of mortal vision, nor the vital air
To nourish and maintain the breathing frame,
As my loved Saviour to redemption's work.
My soul, enraptured with the ELECT of God,
Rejoices in the grace that makes him mine;
My own Elect, and I elect in him.

ELEVENTH MEDITATION.

FATHER.

My Saviour is the everlasting Father.* This name is one bright star in that constellation of the prophetic heavens, which threw so much light upon the church, before the Sun of Righteousness arose. It is not a title of Christ considered as a second person in the Trinity, and in his relation to the Father and the Holy Ghost, but in his relation as God to man.† Christ, being God, is the everlasting Father of the universe, and, in an especial manner, of the whole family of his redeemed. He is the author of existence to all, and the author of a new and spiritual life to his people. "For, have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?" ‡

In this relation of my Saviour to me, I perceive another of his many crowns, which shines

* Isa. ix. 6.

† See Jones on the Trinity, p. 25.

‡ Mal. ii. 10.

with equal glory to him and joy to me. For his love and his sympathy are not only those of a brother and a friend, but those also of a parent, — "a father that pitieth his children." * I require all his pity — all his sympathy — all his forgiving forbearance; for my infirmities are innumerable, my sorrows many, and my sinful provocations multiplied. But he knew all these long before they became known to me; because he is EVERLASTING, and so is his love to me.

I hear him say, in his word, to his church, and therefore to me, as a member of it, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." † It was a happy thought of one, now himself in heaven, — "His love towards them is not of yesterday; nor shall it cease to-morrow. What he ever was, he is, and ever will be, to those who are the objects of his grace, and the happy subjects of his eternal redemption. He is God, and changeth not."

How very precious would this relationship between my Saviour and myself be to me, if the parental ties of earth should be unnaturally torn

* Ps. ciii. 13. † Jer. xxxi. 3.

asunder! Nor will its worth be small, should I live to experience the natural disruption of those ties by the hand of death. Thus David felt—"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." * This was the refuge of the saints in old times; and in this manner they looked and prayed to their Saviour: "Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy glory; where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies towards me? Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our FATHER, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our FATHER, our REDEEMER; thy NAME is from EVERLASTING." † My Saviour is celebrated in that splendid song of his triumph, which St. Paul quotes in reference to his ascension, as "a Father of the fatherless." ‡ Ah! what a poor, fatherless soul should I be, were not "God in Christ reconciling" me "to himself" as a father, — even me, his rebellious and wayward child!

May not this view of the Saviour's parental relation to his people, help to explain the Lord's Prayer, and to rescue it from that neglect into

* *Ps.* xxvii. 10. † Isa. lxiii. 16. ‡ Ps. lxviii. 5.

which it has fallen, through a misunderstanding, with many good people? For does not that prayer admit of being addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ, in all its parts? We cannot imagine that, when, in answer to their request, he taught his disciples to pray, he composed and gave them a form of supplication which should not include himself as the object of their worship. It is, in fact, a filial address from the children to their triune Father in heaven, — to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, — as their Father by creation, redemption, and regeneration. "They are all *together* the Christian's GOD; and both *distinctly* and *together* the Christian's Father."

How grand and yet how mildly beautiful the doctrine of the Holy Trinity appears, when contemplated, as it is ever stated in Scripture, not as a bare doctrine to exercise and confound our reason, but a doctrine of light, comfort, and salvation to the humbly-believing soul! Like every other doctrine of divine truth, it becomes to my soul a matter of experience. "Because they are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father!" *

* *Gal. iv. 6.*

Come, then, my soul, approach thy Saviour with the filial reverence and affection of a child. To him thou owest thy life; for he is thy "life."* His parental care is that providence which foresees and supplies all thy wants, and ministers to thy comfort and security in innumerable ways. Hast thou the feelings of a child towards him? They are the work of his Spirit in thy heart; and he excites them, not to disappoint, but to gratify them to the full. Thou art at liberty to lay all thy petitions at his feet, and to pour out all thy troubles and sorrows into his bosom. "Come, like a simple, helpless child, to him, thy gracious, thy tender, thy EVERLASTING FATHER. Speak out all thy complaints; or, if thou canst not speak them out with the confidence of a *young man in Christ*, endeavor to utter them, though feebly and imperfectly, like one of the *babes*."† The weaker the child, the greater is the care required to preserve it. Lisp them again and again. Thy Father will never send thee empty away. Never did his Spirit put a cry into the soul, which his everlasting love did not mean to answer.

* John xi. 25. † 1 John ii. 13.

Of all the various names
That men or angels bear,
My dearest Saviour claims
No small or partial share:
He takes them all, nor leaves behind
One name that's gentle — one that's kind.

His own eternal Sire,
Whose bosom was his rest
Ere spirits woke the lyre —
Ere man his praise confessed,
Retains not to himself alone
The name of Father, as his own.

O, look upon thy child,
Whose ransom cost thy blood;
In crowds, or lonely wild,
Or on the raging flood,
Thy strong, parental arm extend,
And o'er his steps protecting bend.

And when life's toil is done,
And, spent, he sinks to die,
Then lift him to thy throne,
On thy dear breast to lie, —
Upon thy beaming face to gaze, —
Among thy sons to shout thy praise.

TWELFTH MEDITATION.

FOUNTAIN.

My Saviour is the Fountain of living Waters. Few natural images could so forcibly and beautifully represent Emanuel's excellence as this. Self-existent and eternal, he is not like the stream, which, however deep, and full, and broad, is derived from some other source; but is himself the source of all things, from whom all the streams of being, spiritual and material, have taken their origin. It takes many springs to form one stream, and many streams to fill the channel of a river; nor is the spring unfrequently strangely disproportioned to the river. The traveller is astonished, when he arrives at the fountain-head, to be able to step across it; and the nearer he views the stream to its source, the shallower is its water. But my Saviour is a fountain, compared with which all its own innu*merable* and endless streams are only "as the

drop of a bucket;" * and the nearer I come to him, the more am I lost in wonder at the immensity and glory of the works that emanate from him.

"The angel of the Lord found Hagar by a fountain of water in the wilderness," † when he first met with her in her unhappy wanderings; and at his second interview with her, when she and her Ishmael were spent with fatigue and thirst, he pointed her eager eye to another. But I never found any fountain to supply the wants of my soul, till my Saviour revealed himself to me. Until that happy time, I was a stranger to real happiness, however far I strayed, and however hard I labored for it. With others, bearing the name of his "people," I gave him reason to complain of me, as well as of them: "Be ye astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; be ye very desolate, saith the Lord; for my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." ‡ Well might the heavens be astonished at such folly and guilt. But they may be still more astonished at the love and

* *Isa. xl. 15.* † *Gen. xvi. 7.* ‡ Jer. ii. 12, 13.

power which brought back wanderers and apostates like me. O Saviour, give me to drink so deeply of thee, and to receive so largely out of thy fulness, and to retain so sweet a relish for thy living grace, that I may never forsake thee again, even in thought or desire. To whom or to what should I go? "Thou hast the words of eternal life."* While the poor worldling, following the corrupt bias of his unrenewed nature, turns away from thee, with the silent exclamation of his heart, "No GOD!" I believe and rejoice, that "with thee is the fountain of life;" and that from thee I "shall be abundantly satisfied;" for that "thou wilt make me drink of the river of thy pleasures."†

Jehovah, however amiable in himself, and rich in his essential goodness, must have remained to man as the hard and barren rock, ready to fall in wrath and crush the guilty rebel, but for the plan of redemption. Then infinite mercy "turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters."‡ Israel's thirsting myriads "drank of that spiritual rock that followed them" in the wilderness with its streams, "and that rock was Christ."§ Thus be pleased to follow me,

* John vi. 68.
† Ps. xxxvi. 1, 7, 8.
‡ Ps. cxiv. 8.
§ 1 Cor. x. 4.

O my Saviour, and refresh my soul at every step I take through life, and graciously withhold me from ever resorting to any "troubled fountain, or any corrupt spring," * with which this evil world abounds.

It was of thee, Saviour, and of thy abounding grace, that the prophetic Spirit spake by the mouth and the pen of Joel — "It shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a FOUNTAIN shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim." † What a fountain! to send forth rivers of wine and milk, the richest mercies of the gospel, without money and without price, free as the running waters, for the salvation of the world. Thou too wert in Zechariah's eye, when it gleamed with prophetic fire, and glanced at the time, of which he said, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness." ‡ Yes, that fountain began to flow in Gethsemane, when, "being in an agony," my Saviour's "sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling down

* *Prov. xxv. 26.* † Joel iii. 18. ‡ Zech. xiii. 1.

to the ground." * It was filled and wholly opened, when his torn brow, and nailed feet and hands, and pierced side, gave forth his "precious blood." My soul, rejoice that all thy guilt is washed away in this fountain, and that from thence also flow the cleansing streams of sanctifying grace to make thee holy. What will be thy exultation, when thou shalt reach the fountain-head of all thy happiness! Angels will not be nearer, nor will they drink deeper draughts of joy from the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb." †

FOUNT OF BEING! Nature flows
Full in all her streams from thee;
Their original each shows,
From archangels down to me:
Each world a drop — each drop a world, proclaims
Thee its bright Author, by a thousand names.

Fount of bliss! no joy can rise,
Freshening vast creation's field,
But the joy thy smile supplies,—
But the joy thy bounties yield:

* Luke xxii. 44. † Rev. xxii. 1.

Spirits of heaven, and insects on their wing,
Of their delight own thee alone the spring.

Fount of rich, atoning grace!
When the two-edged sword of wrath
Flashed upon our guilty race,
Hanging o'er their hopeless path,
Then from thy pierced heart burst forth the flood,
To purge our guilt — thy own most precious blood.

Fount of purifying love!
Pouring forth thy cleansing waves,
Fitting for thy courts above
Sin and Satan's dunghill slaves; *
Millions of white-robed saints on high appear,
Washed spotless fair by thee — once sinners here.

Fount of being! fount of bliss!
Fount of sin-atoning blood!
Fount of peace and holiness!
Plunge, O! plunge me in thy flood!
Thus cleansed and blest, ere long my soul shall rise,
To drink from Thee, life's Fountain, in the skies.

* 2 Cor. ix. 15.

THIRTEENTH MEDITATION.

FOUNDATION.

My Saviour is the FOUNDATION of his church, and consequently the foundation of all the hopes and comforts, all the holiness and happiness, of his people. "Behold," said Jehovah, "I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." *

What more can I need in a foundation than suitableness, strength, durability, and immovableness? My Saviour is all this. Jehovah, who most perfectly knew what precise basis was needed for the covenant he designed to establish with fallen man, chose and appointed his dear and only Son, in his compound nature, for that purpose. The covenant of works, into which he entered with newly-created man, failed, through the inadequacy of the security on which it rested, — the will of the first Adam. "The second"

* Isa. xxviii. 16.

Adam "is the Lord from heaven," and secures upon himself the stability of the covenant of grace. Have I acceded to that covenant? It "is ordered in all things and sure." It shall, therefore, be "all my salvation and all my desire." * For, as every stone in a building rests upon the foundation, so every promise of the covenant rests upon Christ, and in him is "yea, and in him Amen." †

The suitableness of my foundation I perceive in its appointment by the Father. Its strength is omnipotence. "If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong," ‡ and able to bear up the weight of any superstructure of hope and confidence that I may repose on him. Let me raise the fabric of my expectations higher and more ample than the heavens, furnished with all the glory and bliss with which Jehovah himself can bless a soul he loves: my Saviour is a sufficient basis to support the magnificent pile, without any fear or possibility of failure. The base of an earthly building may itself decay: it may be made of perishable materials. Yes, and the foundations of all terrestrial structures, with those structures, will finally be destroyed. Babel — where is it? The proud

* *2 Sam. xxiii. 5.* † 2 Cor. i. 20. ‡ Job ix. 19.

pyramids — where will they be? "THEY shall perish; but THOU shalt endure." * And I shall remain with thee. A foundation, sufficient for its purpose, strong and durable, may yet be but temporary: — it may be removed. The Roman ploughshare drove from its place the stupendous foundation of Zion's temple. But it would require more than omnipotence to move omnipotence. It cannot be. And equally impossible is my removal from him. "Coming unto him as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious," am I built up, as a lively stone, on him? Then, not in the fleshly confidence, which betrayed the Psalmist, but in the divine confidence, which infallibly secures, I may rejoicingly say, "I shall not be moved." †

Blow, ye blustering tempests, blow!
Rush, ye rapid torrents: — flow
Rough, ye angry tides below!
Reckless my fabric stands:
Based on everlasting rock,
Firm amidst the earthquake's shock,
Lo, the whirlwind's rage I mock,
Safe in Jehovah's hands.

* Ps. cii. 26. † Ps. lxii. 6.

Fearless, then, my soul, repose;
Scorn the threats of all thy foes;
Dread no form of earthly woes;
Christ their foundation is;
Christ, the man-rejected stone—
Precious still, Jehovah's own,
His delight and choice alone—
Jesus insures thy bliss.

FOURTEENTH MEDITATION.

FRIEND.

My Saviour is my Friend. It was in proud contempt that Jesus was called "a friend of publicans and sinners," * by men who had chosen the friendship of the world as their portion. Most gladly will I class myself with the outcasts of mankind, if I may but acquire an interest in the friendship of the Lord Jesus Christ. The mutual attachment of David and Jonathan was a beautiful example of human friendship. But it was a faint, and feeble, and cold affection, compared with that subsisting between Christ and the soul he loves. O that mine for him was more nearly proportioned to his for me! When through sin I stood friendless in the world, Jesus undertook the fearful office of "Surety," under circumstances so difficult, that, had all the created intelligent beings in the universe stood forward,

* Matt. xi. 19.

their single or united bond could not have been accepted for me. While I have had to lament the humors and fickleness of human friendships, he has proved himself to be the "Friend that loveth at all times." * My heart has often been cold, and my regard wavering. He has never changed. When even near kinsmen have treated me with neglect and indifference, he has shown himself "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." † The cross, on which he died for me, and by which I am crucified unto the world for him, is the bond of our union, and allows of no separation. The impaling nails fastened him to my soul, and fasten me to him in an indissoluble attachment.

Times occur when this best of friends proves his love by giving me pain. "But faithful are the wounds" of such "a friend," ‡ for they are inflicted to save me from the deceitful kisses of an enemy. What intercourse of friendship so effectually "sharpeneth the countenance," § as Christ's? Jesus I can and do esteem above all others; and he merits supreme regard. He has (Lord! enable me to say it with sincerity) no

* Prov. xvii. 17.
† Prov. xviii. 24.
‡ Prov. xxvii. 6.
§ Prov. xxvii. 17.

rival in my heart. Many share his love with me, but this lessens not my portion. In all my perplexities, I can open my mind to him, and repose on his wisdom. In all my difficulties, I can have recourse to his power, and in all my wants, to his rich bounty.

He not only permits me to call him my friend, — a liberty often given by a superior to an inferior, — but he also addresses me by the same endearing title. Thus he spoke of "Abraham," * "Thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, my friend;" and the Lord said to his disciples, "I have called you friends." † I have tasted the sweetness of this friendship in life. It will allay the bitterness of death. It will diffuse its fragrance over my eternity. "This is my FRIEND, O daughters of Jerusalem." ‡

In those lone hours, when musing grief
Refuses sympathy from man,
And shrinks from every proffered plan
Of soothing comfort, or relief, —

* Isa. xli. 8. † John xv. 15. ‡ Cant. v. 16.

How sweet the hopes which then descend
Upon the lorn and blighted breast!
As dews which on the mountains rest,
That heaven contains a SAVIOUR FRIEND.

Upon the friendless soul he smiles,
When upward turns the tearful eye,
And, from his fire-cloud in the sky,
The pilgrim's lonely path beguiles;
And when, with weary steps and slow,
He paces o'er the parched plain,
To quench his thirst and ease his pain,
The stricken rocks with fountains flow.

O, place me, then, where spreading trees
Ne'er throw their shadow o'er the soil,
Where rock or sand mocks human toil,
Nor ever sighs the cooling breeze;
One form with all the scene shall blend
A softening shade — a balmy peace,
And all my thoughts from care release,
The faith-seen presence of my SAVIOUR FRIEND.

FIFTEENTH MEDITATION.

GIFT OF GOD.

My Saviour is the Gift of God.* He revealed himself as such to the woman of Samaria, when she hesitated to bestow a draught of water on a Jewish stranger—"I that speak unto thee am he." †

"A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." ‡ "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." § It is a great mercy to know this. It is the source of innumerable joys to my heart, that, surrounded and laden as I am with gifts, which make up for me a large amount of happiness, I have not to put the question, "Who gave me all these things?" and then to hear only the echo of my inquiry, "Who?" They all come from him whom I

* John iv. 10.
† John iv. 26.
‡ John iii. 27.
§ James i. 17.

am privileged to call my Father and my God. But as, in the natural world, one generous boon — the blessing of light — brings into view and clothes with beauty all other objects, so God's gift of his Son to be my Saviour — to be the Saviour of the world — enhances, if it does not create, the true value of all his other gifts.

My soul, when wilt thou be able to calculate the value of this gift? The felicity of elect angels, given to them, as it is, of God, falls far short of that which he has conferred on thee. The happiness of Adam in Eden was but as the flowers that faded there, and is not to be compared with this. "His only-begotten Son," the equal partaker of his nature, the "very brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," — he was the gift of God's unequalled and amazing love. "He so loved the world!" * Every circumstance adds to the rich value of the bestowment, — the giver, the gift, and the receivers.

The Holy Spirit is also called the "unspeakable gift of God;" † but this is included in Christ, to whom the Spirit is given without measure, for the benefit of his people. Every desire of my

* *John iii. 16.* † 2 Cor. ix. 15.

heart, indeed, and every want of my soul, is provided for in Christ. If he, therefore, is mine, what can I lack? "The world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, — all are mine." *

Let me — help me, O Lord, to adore the grace which enables me to call thee mine. Let me praise thee for the faith — for that, too, is thy gift † — which makes thee mine. But may I ever be deprived of this gift? After reaching the pinnacle of spiritual wealth, can I be cast down to utter destitution? No; "for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." ‡ Jehovah is a stranger to "variableness." He revokes not his free gifts. The gift of God is my Saviour, and mine forever.

Ah! if I know the gift of God,
And knew that gift was mine
I'd scatter all my fears abroad,
And never more repine.

No earthly wealth can satisfy
The cravings of my breast;
For other, higher good I sigh, —
For pardon, peace, and rest.

* 1 Cor. iii. 22. † Eph. ii. 8. ‡ Rom. xi. 29.

"Come, mourning soul, dismiss thy fears;
I know thy heart's desire:
And faith is beaming through thy tears;
And I that faith inspire.

"Thy hand on God's free bounty lay;
For all he gives is thine:
Believe — rejoice! Now, mourner, say, —
Was ever grace like mine!"

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SIXTEENTH MEDITATION.

GLORY.

My Saviour is the Glory of the Lord. Before whom is it that the pioneering prophet crieth in the wilderness? It is no less and no other than Jehovah. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."* That "more than a prophet," John the Baptist, teaches me to understand this of my Saviour. But Isaiah added, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Now, my Saviour was the grand object of revelation, and he is therefore the Glory of the Lord. In him and through him alone does Jehovah manifest his glory to our fallen race. Considered abstractedly, the divine glory is the display of all the divine perfections in harmonious union. These perfections, however, in this harmonious union, are Jehovah

* Isa. xl. 3—5.

himself; and the glory of the Lord is but another name of Jehovah — of the Lord Jesus, in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." * "In him all the fulness was pleased to dwell." †

What can be so worthy of my contemplation, or of my most intense desire to contemplate, as the glory of the Lord? Compared therewith, what is the whole universe but a blank? Let me rejoice that the Lord has provided for the gratification of my soul's desire; for in him, whom I adore and love, I behold "the likeness of the glory of the Lord," yea, that glory itself.‡ In Christ, like Moses in the cleft of the rock, I may have a near and a safe view of that which, out of Christ, no man can see and live.§ When, in the full vision of my Saviour, I shall be entirely transformed into his image, I shall be able to gaze with ease and delight on that splendor which fills all heaven with its radiance.

It is related of Lord Nelson, that, at a critical moment of his early life, "a sudden glow of patriotism was kindled within him;" and that, "from that time, a radiant orb was suspended in

* Col. ii. 9.
† *Col. i. 19.*
‡ Ezek. i. 28.
§ Ex. xxxiii. 18—23.

his mind's eye, which urged him onward to renown." * Great man! but little in all thy greatness; what was that "radiant orb," that filled the eye of thy soul, in comparison with the object which fills the eye of the believer's soul, when by faith he beholds the Saviour as the glory of the Lord, and follows on, like the Israelites, in the path of the fiery and cloudy pillar! May this "radiant orb," this world of light, my universe, my all, be continually before me, and allure me on to infinitely more than earthly renown!

Who is this that appears at "the gates," "the everlasting doors" of heaven? He is the KING OF GLORY. And "who is this King of glory?" He is "the Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." "The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." † But do I not behold the "Lord of glory crucified by the princes of this world"? ‡ My Saviour, then, is the King and Lord of glory. It is the cross that seals his title to the crown, which shines with so much splendor on his beaming brow. "Now," when he had his cross in near prospect, "Now is the Son of man

* Southey's Life of Nelson, p. 17.

† Ps. xxiv. 7—10. ‡ 1 Cor. ii. 8.

glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. To the father of the faithful he appeared as the God of glory," * when he called him out of darkness into light, and gave him the promise of Canaan, and of a still better country. Abraham, as well as his children by faith, could say, "The God of glory is my Saviour." The salvation, therefore, which I expect from him, is glorious and divine, perfect in all its parts, as the author of it is perfect.

The Lord Jesus is also the glory of his church, as much as he is the glory of the Father. Thus did Isaiah address Sion — "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." † By bringing his church into vital union with himself, as a bride with the bridegroom, he imparts to her his own glory; for the glory of his righteousness is hers, and therefore he can "present her to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." ‡ A glorious church, indeed; not as she appears in the robe of power, and in the splendor of wealth, but as filled with the presence of the Lord in the

* *Acts vii. 2.* † Isa. lx. 19. ‡ Eph. v. 27.

midst of her. "This honor have all his saints;"* and, like the planets, they reflect more or less of his glory, according to the nearness or remoteness of the orbit in which they move.

My Saviour, be thou the glory of my soul. I shall need no other. Angels and archangels have none higher and none brighter. Nay, they have none so bright. Thou art their glory in the relation of Creator, and by the tie of electing love. Thou art my glory by a more intimate relation, by a communication of nature, and by the tie of redeeming love.

Brightness of the Father's glory,
Image of the Father's face,
While ten thousand worlds adore thee,
Suppliant, I entreat thy grace.

Richly shone thy Godhead's glory,
Ere the morning stars were made;
Richer, when our souls implore thee
For thy promised mercy's aid.

Show me, Saviour, show thy glory;
Not in Sinai's pomp arrayed,
But as when the cross upbore thee,
'Neath the dark-veiled heaven's shade.

* Ps. cxlix. 9.

Vested in thy robes of glory,—
  Martyred, living Saviour owned,
Soon shall all the world before thee,
  See thee, Son of God, enthroned.

Then — transporting thought! — thy glory
  Shall thy risen church enshrine;
Then, while countless hosts adore thee,
  Heaven and glory shall be mine.

SEVENTEENTH MEDITATION.

GOD.

My Saviour is my God. None, indeed, but God, could be my Saviour. None else could undertake the work of salvation. Were it possible that Jesus never bore the name of Deity, yet his accomplishment of the plan of redeeming mercy, whereby a brand is plucked from the everlasting burnings, and converted into a pillar in the heavenly temple, as fully evinces the essential divinity of his nature, as creation proves the Creator to be divine.

"Behold! God is my salvation." Let Satan behold this, and despair of effecting the ruin of my soul. Let the world behold this, and no longer either wonder at or scorn me for reposing my eternal all upon this security. Let my own soul behold it, and say, "I will trust, and not be afraid."* Whom could I intrust with

* Isa. xii. 2.

the interests of my eternity, if not him who not merely announces the sublime truth, but takes the greatest and most condescending pains to assure me that, when my soul reposes its hope of salvation in him, it leans upon GOD? He places the trumpet of his gospel to his own lips, and echoes it to the boundaries of the globe. "Look unto ME, and be ye SAVED, all the ends of the earth; for I am GOD, and there is none else." * O Saviour! none were ever farther off from thee than I was. I have looked to thee; for thou hast opened mine eyes, and thou hast saved me.

When "God said, Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness," † I hear my Saviour's voice in the Triune council. One in essence with the Father and the Spirit, he was one in will and operation. He rejoiced in that work of creation above all others, because it was to lead to the greater work of redemption, in which the fulness of the glory of the Godhead was to be more amply manifested than in all the other labors of his might. He created many orders of intelligent beings far superior to man; and he foresaw that sin would mar a portion of those of his

* *Isa. xlv. 22.* † Gen. i. 26.

higher works, while no provision would be made for their recovery. The fall and the restoration of man were contemplated in the council that resolved upon his creation; and the same divine agency was to be employed, both in calling him into existence, and in recovering him from self-wrought ruin. For this latter purpose, "God was manifested in the flesh." *

Unbelief stumbles over a pebble, when it stumbles at the doctrine of the Son's incarnation. For, stupendous as the doctrine is, unbelief cannot hesitate as to its *possibility*. He who made all natures, can clothe himself in the garb of any, and bring any of them into as close a union with himself as he pleases. There *can* be no difficulty here. But the *probability* of the event is doubted. If God himself had not revealed it, I can form no conception of the faith that could have believed its probability. But God has revealed it. He "hath purchased the church with his own blood." † "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." ‡ I cannot hesitate, therefore, to address my Saviour in the words of convinced and humbled Thomas:

* 1 Tim. iii. 16. † Acts xx. 28. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 19.

"My Lord and my God!" * thou hast purchased me with thine own blood! What an inestimable price! Thou hast reconciled me to thyself. Surely, thou wilt never suffer so costly a purchase to be lost, or to be wrested from thee. Surely, thine arm and love are as powerful and constant to keep, as they were to redeem.

Timid believer — abased, inquiring sinner, look no more with overwhelming terror upon thine enemies, or upon thy guilt, and the broken fiery law. See! "THE ETERNAL GOD is thy refuge," † even "Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come." ‡ Thy Saviour is "the everlasting God;" § for he "is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," and therefore he "fainteth not, neither is weary" in the great undertaking of bringing thee in safety and rejoicing to thy heavenly destiny. Thy Saviour is THE MOST HIGH GOD; || for the glorious Being whom the Israelites "tempted" in the wilderness, and whom David calls by this title, is declared by St. Paul to be "Christ." ¶ All that thou canst read, or hear, or expect of God, thou hast in the person of the Lord Jesus.

* John xx. 28. ‡ 1 Thess. i. 10. || Psalm lxxviii. 56
† Deut. xxxiii 27. § *Isa. xl. 28.* ¶ 1 Cor. x. 9.

How true, then, are these exquisite and comprehensive sentences! "To win Christ is the greatest gain. To know Christ is the sublimest knowledge. To live upon Christ is the happiest life below." Wretched soul! who art without Christ; for thou art "without God in the world,"* and consequently without hope. Blessed souls! who can say, "This God is our God forever and ever." † Whatever else I have, or fail to have, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." ‡ In life and in death, "My soul shall magnify the Lord, and my spirit shall rejoice in GOD MY SAVIOUR." §

My Lord, my God! when faith can see
Thy side — thy hands transpierced for me —
I scorn the doubts I held before,
And all my unbelief deplore.

Thou didst sustain the awful load —
That burden borne proclaimed thee God!
A world's accumulated guilt!
For which thy precious blood was spilt.

* Eph. ii. 12.
† Ps. xlviii. 14.
‡ Hab. iii. 18.
§ Luke i. 46, 47.

My sin alone had weight to sink
A creature down perdition's brink:
When Christ the grave's dark pathway trod,
Then rose — e'en death confessed him God.

And now, with mingled joy and shame,
I sing thy great, thy glorious name:
Faith does but touch — it asks no more;
Then kneels to love and to adore.

EIGHTEENTH MEDITATION.

HEAD.

My Saviour is "the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." * The head is the fountain of authority and influence. Such is my Saviour to me. Such is he to his whole church. He repeatedly bears this name. Nay, he is not only the head of his church, but "the head over all things" for the benefit of his church. What a field of contemplation and admiring love does this fact open before my soul! Am I a living member of his church? Then am I a part of his body, into which he is constantly pouring life, feeling, strength, enjoyment. These emanate from the head in the animal frame to all its parts; and any of these parts, in a state of separation, cease to partake of them. My spiritual life, sensations, strength, joys, are the same in

* Luke iv. 16; 1 Cor. xi. 3; Col. i. 18; ii. 10—19.

nature, though they may differ in degree, with those of my Redeemer himself.

There exists an intimate sympathy and affection between the head and the members. Touch, or even *breathe* upon the minutest of these, and the head instantaneously perceives it. Saul of Tarsus went forth "*breathing* out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." * It was immediately felt by their Head in heaven, who accused the young zealot of persecuting *him*. Let "a cup of cold water" be given — let the smallest act of kindness be done to the least of Christ's little ones, — he receives it as done to himself, and will so acknowledge it in the last day. He loves his body, the church, and exercises the most tender care over it, numbering every hair; and whoso toucheth that body, "toucheth the apple of his eye." †

As the body is not complete without the head, so neither is the head complete without the body. In our divine Head, all the members are complete, ‡ each possessing in him and deriving from him all they want. How inexcusable am I, if I even "seem to come short"! How great is

* Acts ix. † Zech. ii. 8. ‡ Col. ii. 10.

the dishonor I bring upon my Saviour, by exhibiting to the world a deficiency of Christian graces! O Lord, help me to draw more largely, even abundantly, from thee, that thou mayest be more fully glorified in me; while I seek satisfaction only in thy being "made of God unto me wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." * But my soul is filled with wonder at perceiving that the body, with all its minutest members, is essential to the completion of the head. The church is my Saviour's fulness. If I — "less than the least of all saints," yet holding on to him by faith — were to perish, the Lord Jesus would suffer loss. He would have one vessel the less, into which to pour the riches of his grace. The Head of the church being safe and in glory, the body, in all its fulness and entireness, must follow. He, presiding over all things, not merely as God, but as the divine Mediator, will make all things subservient to the interests, happiness, and final salvation of his people.

* 1 Cor. i. 30.

United to my living Head,
By faith, and hope, and love,
I feel, while earth's low path I tread,
My better part above.

Though clouds of glory intervene,
That now I see him not,
'Tis but a soon-rent veil between,
And he forgets me not.

Ere long, — his risen self the sign,
The pledge that I shall rise, —
I shall these mortal bonds resign,
And join him in the skies.

NINETEENTH MEDITATION.

HUSBAND.

My Saviour is the Husband of his church. "For," said the prophetic voice to the called object of the divine love, "thy Maker is thine Husband; The Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called." * The great motive and example urged upon husbands and wives, in the discharge of their relative duties, is drawn from the love and relation of Christ to his church, and of that church to him; and this image of the union between my Saviour and the souls of his people, being the tenderest of all, is very frequently employed in his word. This circumstance, viewed in connection with Isaiah's assurance to the church, strongly confirms the precious doctrine of my Saviour's divinity. There must, indeed, be one common nature between the

* Isa. liv. 5.

two parties in the conjugal union. The Holy One, therefore, became bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, that he might effect that union. For he "loved the church, and gave himself for it," which he could not have done in any nature but the human; "that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." * And could the Lord Jesus accomplish this, unless he were truly and properly divine?

What may not every member of a church so loved, so redeemed, so blessed — what may not I expect from my Saviour, by virtue of this most endearing of all relations? By his own bleeding hand washed, in the blood of his own pierced heart, from all my guilt; renewed in my sinful nature by his Holy Spirit; and destined by his unalterable choice to share with him the glory of his heavenly state, I am permitted (O mysterious joy!) to exult in the knowledge that he takes a complacent delight in me: "For as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." † I may look for all that is tender in affection, all that is faithful and un-

* *Eph. v. 25—27.* † Isa. lxii. 5.

changeable in love, and all that is secure in protection, from my Saviour. I may sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit shall be sweet to my taste; for his "banner over me is love," * and that love is subject to no variableness.

O my Saviour, how may I blush and be confounded at a review of my unfaithfulness and inconstancy towards thee! Where shall I hide my shame-covered face? Where, but in thine own bosom of pitying and forbearing love? There thy kiss of peace assures the repenting soul of thy free pardon. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." † Humbled and instructed by the past, may I never desert thee again, or suffer one unfaithful thought to harbor in my breast.

Pure as the virgin robe of Eve, that flowed
So chastely fair in Eden's fragrant gales,
And met the waking eye of man's first sire;—
Yes, purer far than e'en that spotless garb,

* Cant. ii. 3, 4.

† Isa. xliii. 25. See also Jer. iii. 20—23.

Appeared the ransomed church, when, all complete,
Descending from her God, down heaven's bright road,
The Prophet's eye beheld her, full prepared,
Adorned for her husband as a bride.
That robe, wove by the hand that bled and died —
Washed white (mysterious process!) in its blood —
Awaits her now, ere long to be assumed.
No tear shall ever stain that bridal vest,
Nor sorrow o'er its lustre cast a shade,
Nor death defile it in the grave's dark dust.
A member, though the least, a member still
Of this betrothed church, *my* soul shall wear
The wedding garment, and with humble joy
Sit at the marriage supper of the Lamb.*

* Rev. xxi. 2—4. Rev. xix. 9.

TWENTIETH MEDITATION.

JEHOVAH.

My Saviour is Jehovah. Thus runs the directory of faith. "Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."* In the Lord, viewed merely as God, my guilty, timid soul could never trust. I must shrink from the thought, and from the very touch of his strength, knowing that it would be employed against me, in vindication of his own law. Jehovah incarnate, in the person of the Son, is the allowed, the commanded object of my confidence. As I am to exist through eternity, as the stream on which I am embarked will carry me on forever, and my weakness as a creature will never leave me, my soul needs everlasting strength, on which to repose; and this it has in the Lord Jesus. From him it will emanate to me, as the sap from the tree to the branches, water

* Isa. xxvi. 4.

from the spring, and heat and light from the sun.

My Saviour has all the titles of Jehovah. The great I AM,* who commissioned Moses to humble Pharaoh, and to deliver his people Israel, stood in human form before the Jews, and proclaimed his own divine majesty in those memorable words, "Before Abraham was, I am." † By the words of his mouth, and the wonders of his hand, and the mighty works of his own Spirit, he vindicated his claim to the august name of Emanuel, — Deity ever present with his people; their strength, their all in all.

Who but my Saviour was on his road, when the voice of the prophetic Baptist was heard in the wilderness? Who but my Saviour will again be approaching, when the cry shall once more go through the earth, "Prepare ye the way of the LORD, (JEHOVAH,) make straight in the desert a highway for our God"? ‡ Zacharias, his father, when he held the infant prophet in his arms, under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost, thus interpreted and appropriated the proclamation: "Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face

* Ex. iii. 14. † John viii. 58. ‡ Isa. xl. 3.

of the Lord, to prepare his ways."* The great preacher of repentance himself applied this passage in the same manner, when he was asked to declare his own character and office.†

In calling my Saviour Jehovah, according to the tenor of the Holy Scriptures, I ascribe to him, what can be ascribed to no created being, however exalted, "necessary, independent, and eternal existence." And what are my most exalted notions of a being so surpassing all the powers of thought? They resemble a bubble, endeavoring to expand itself to embrace the universe. Yet this most sublime appellation belongs, in all its unbounded amplitude, to Him in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Blessed Saviour, assist my feeble endeavors to meditate on thy glorious essence — thy adorable and amiable perfections. The very contemplation, aided and sanctified by thee, has a transforming efficacy. For, "with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, I am changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."‡ If this is the present effect of beholding thy glory, O Lord, reflected from the mirror of thy word, what will be the re-

* Luke i. 76. † John i. 23. ‡ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

sult of the beatific vision, when I shall see thee face to face! That result is intimated to me by St. John's language: "When he shall appear, we shall be LIKE HIM, for we shall see him as he is." *

I AM! — Creation turns her listening ear,
To learn the mystery, hidden deep and long;
For never yet did minds angelic hear,
In full, what boundless attributes belong
To Him whose praise inspires their endless song:
To man, debased, how low! now raised, how high!
Higher than highest heaven's sublimest throng,
That circles round the throne — to human eye
Jehovah now reveals his awful Deity.

I AM! — Hell hears and trembles at the sound,
Owns all he is, midst fires that ever flame;
And cries that ever wail their echoes round,
And tears that ever fall, and shameless shame,
And curses loud that ever curse His name,
Whose love was slighted, and whose wrath defied:
Ah! now they own his erst rejected claim
Of fear and homage due: — in sin they died,
Victims of daring lust, and unbelief, and pride.

* 1 John iii. 2.

I AM! — Within an earthly temple's shrine
Jehovah makes his glorious nature known;
To earth — low earth, heaven's habitants incline
Their wakeful ears, and, turning from the throne,
Fix their fond gaze upon the cross alone,
To learn their God and ours — for there, in lines
In their sublimer lore unwrit — unknown,
JEHOVAH in his full-orbed glory shines,
And opens up his love's unfathomable mines.

TWENTY-FIRST MEDITATION.

JUDGE.

My Saviour is my Judge. One of the first thoughts of the awakened soul respecting God, invests him with the awful character of a Judge. "Could I with safety and hope approach him, I would confess my guilt, and 'I would make supplication to my Judge.'" * When hope springs up in the mind, and some view is caught of the gospel plea, provided for sinners, the soul utters its feelings again in words like those of Job: "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat; I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. So should I be delivered forever from my Judge." † This, perhaps, was once the very utmost of my expectations. Deliverance from the wrath of Him that sitteth on the throne, by his mercy, exercised for the sake of Christ, in some

* Job ix. 15. † Job xxiii. 3, 4—7.

way that I did not clearly understand, was the sum total of my hopes.

But what was the joy of my heart, when the revealing Spirit of God exhibited to me the great privileges of the soul, that is come by faith unto Mount Sion, and has escaped the terrors of "the mount that might be touched" only at the penalty of death! * I saw that it was one of those privileges to come unto "God the Judge of all" with humble, joyful confidence. For round the burning throne I saw "the blood of sprinkling," quenching the flame of wrath, and diffusing the sweetest fragrance, at once refreshing and inviting to the suppliant soul. And then I saw, between me and the "fiery law," "Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant," making intercession for me.

As faith is strengthened, like the sight, it obtains a nearer view of its object. I now perceive that my very Judge is my "Advocate," my "Counsellor," and my Saviour. He advises me what plea to put in before his own tribunal, in bar of judgment; and that plea is his own obedience to his own law in my stead. Lest I should fail in pleading my cause, though provided by

* Heb. xii. 18—24.

himself with my ground of justification, he undertakes its advocacy, and pleads it for me. He is even responsible for the complete success of my suit; for he presides in the judgment, not more in his judicial character, than as my Saviour.

Be not dismayed, then, O my soul, at the awful circumstances of this world's closing scene. Remember thy Saviour, and "that it is he which is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." * Look upon thyself as engaged in the most arduous conflict, and in a race which will be most earnestly contested to the end, by those who only aim at disappointing thee. But keep thine eye fixed upon the prize. See in whose hand it is held, and by whose decision it is to be awarded; even by thy Saviour's. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life" † by anticipation. Press forward, exultingly crying at every step, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." ‡

* Acts x. 42. † 1 Tim. vi. 12. ‡ 2 Tim. iv. 8.

The soul that loves thy throne of grace,
And is familiar there,
In praise and lowly prayer,
Knows every feature of thy face;
Nor, when thy judgment-seat shall rise
In clouded majesty,
And heaven and earth shall flee,
As blighted leaves across the skies,
Shall tremble at the dread assize.

My Saviour, in that awful day,
Thy smile my soul shall cheer,
And calm my every fear;
For what shall then inspire dismay?
My Advocate shall fill the throne,
Himself the sentence give,
And bid me ever live,
And, 'midst the world's expiring groan,
My name amongst his saints will own.

TWENTY-SECOND MEDITATION

KING.

My Saviour is my King. The prince of the power of the air, having succeeded in withdrawing my first parents from their loyalty to Jehovah, usurped supreme authority over this province of God's empire. He afterwards had the audacity to tempt the Son of God to do him homage, by the promise of a viceroyalty under him.* But the Lord resolved to redeem the rebellious and enslaved province back to himself, and to erect it into a kingdom of unparalleled glory. This kingdom of the divine Messiah was the grand theme to which the prophets struck their lyres, and was the chief expectation of the Jewish people. They mistook its nature, looking for a temporal prince, who should raise them to the summit of empire, and hold all other nations tributary to them. He assured them that his

* Luke iv. 5—8.

kingdom was not of this world; but they were so bigoted to their own error, and so exasperated by their disappointment, that they crucified him, amidst the emblems and homage of mock majesty, under the double charge of treason against Cæsar, and blasphemy against the Majesty of heaven.

"Yet" — how forcibly expressive is the word! — "Yet," notwithstanding the rage and madness of the people, and even by means of their infatuated opposition, "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." * Christ paid down the price of his mediatorial crown, and throne, and empire, in the shedding of his precious blood. He then ascended on high, and was enthroned and crowned King of kings. From his regal seat he exercises kingly authority, restraining the power, and gradually subverting the dominion of Satan, and drawing over the subjects of the prince of darkness into his own kingdom of light.

How impressively affected was Isaiah by the vision of my Saviour in his regal glory, when, with many expressions of self-abasement, he exclaimed, "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts"! † Every believing eye looked through the vista of the promises, when the

* Ps. ii. 6. † Isa. vi. 5. John xii. 41.

prophetic oracles said, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness:" * "A King shall reign and prosper:" † "Jehovah is our King; he will save us:" ‡ "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation:" § "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth." ||

In thy person, my adorable Saviour, and in thy regal office, the glowing language of the "Song of loves," ¶ is fully realized. Meditating upon thee, "my heart" will be pondering "a good matter." At thy throne my soul has done its faithful homage, and cheerfully submits to thy sceptre. "The oil of gladness," with which thou art anointed, reaches my subject soul. If any rebel sins yet lurk within my heart, let "thine arrows be sharp in the heart of these thine enemies;" and may every power of my soul, subdued to thee by thy victorious grace, acknowledge no other Lord. When shall I behold thee invested with thy "many crowns" ** — with the multifold crown of the whole earth? O listen, kingly Saviour, to my prayer; listen to the sup-

* Isa. xxxii. 1.
† Jer. xxiii. 5.
‡ Isa. xxxiii. 22.
§ Zech. ix. 9.
|| Zech. xiv. 9
¶ Ps. xlv.
** Rev. xix. 12.

plication of thy universal church. "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty; with thy glory and thy majesty, ride prosperously," until "the seventh angel sounds, and there are great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." *

And was not, then, thy Godhead's crown
Glory enough for thee,
That thou wouldst lay that glory down,
To come, and die for me?
And dost thou deem thy crown of thorns
The brightest that thy brow adorns?

Thine empire — was its boundless line
Too narrow for thy sway,
That thou wouldst all thy realms resign,
And quit the worlds of day,
To wrest this province from the foe,
And lay the dark usurper low?

Thus the fond shepherd leaves the fold,
To seek the wandering one;

* Rev. xi. 15.

Nor shrinks from peril, heat, or cold,
Till pity's task is done:
That one to him is dearer made
Than the whole flock that never strayed.

My Sovereign Lord! my Shepherd King!
My spirit's homage meet,
While I my heart's full tribute bring,
And lay it at thy feet:—
Dear Sovereign of my prostrate soul,
When wilt thou reign from pole to pole?

TWENTY-THIRD MEDITATION.

LAMB.

My Saviour is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."* Did not fallen but penitent Adam have a view of his promised deliverer under this name, when he shed the blood of his first sacrifice in Eden, and knelt beside its consumed flesh on the first altar of atonement? It is highly probable, that the first creature of this lower world, which tasted death, was one of the firstlings of the brute creation, from the newly-created flock that had strayed, in joyful security, over the lawns of Paradise. With the unblemished fleece of that spotless victim were "our primal parents clothed."† They were significantly taught by him who, doubtless, condescended to explain the types of mercy, that they might look for atonement and righteousness to the Lamb of God — to Jehovah,

* John i. 29. † Gen. iii. 21.

incarnate in the woman's promised seed. What other object met and rejoiced the eye of Abel's faith, when he was kneeling at the accepted altar of burnt sacrifice, and when he breathed out his soul into the hands of the Saviour in whom he believed, beneath the murderous blows of a brother's hand? *

If the morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb was instituted at the fall, and was continued uninterruptedly on some altar or other raised by the Lord's people, in that sacrifice alone, three millions of lambs assisted the faith of believers, before John the Baptist exhibited to view the grand antitype. All that perfection of atoning virtue, which was shadowed forth in the careful selection of lambs for the Jewish altar, was fully displayed in Christ; and the prophetic circumstances of their slaughter, whether for the altar or for the paschal table, were fulfilled in the affecting particulars of his death.

May the Christ-revealing Spirit engage my soul in frequent, deep, and delightful meditation on this grand turning-point of its deliverance from eternal death, — that I was "not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but

* *Gen.* iv. 4—8. Heb. xi. 4.

with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb, without blemish and without spot." * How complete was the atonement which Jesus made for my guilt! How perfectly free from blemish, and from defiling spot, must be the soul that is washed in that "precious blood"! Joyful assurance, — it "cleanses from ALL sin"! † My soul, "dost thou believe on the Son of God"? ‡ Art thou looking to the Lamb of God? That look of faith transfers all thy guilt to his past sacrifice, and confers on thee his everlasting righteousness. The church — the soul that has been redeemed by a Lamb thus unblemished and spotless, must be itself without spot, in the sight of divine justice. That justice is satisfied with the sacrifice of "the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world," § and is therefore necessarily reconciled to the soul which is interested in the spotless offering.

In turning over the prophetic pages of the Apocalypse, I am struck with the prominence given to this name of my Saviour, in all that is said of the future periods of the church militant and the church triumphant. When I behold my

* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.
† 1 John i. 7.
‡ John ix. 35.
§ Rev. xiii. 8.

Saviour, I shall immediately recognize the sacrificial marks of the slain Lamb.* He is adored and praised by the heavenly hosts themselves, as "the Lamb that was slain."† The great object of dread to the reprobate multitude, in the day of account, will be "the wrath of the Lamb."‡ To Christ, under this character, the white-robed host in glory are to look for all their bliss,§ having overcome their great adversary, and gained the palm of victory, through his blood.‖ The light of his presence and glory is to be the never-setting sun of the heavenly world;¶ and the full tide of everlasting happiness to the millions of the saved, is to flow from the throne of "the Lamb."** O my soul, wilt thou not give up all things, to be numbered with them "who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth"? ††

Blessed, holy, spotless LAMB!
Seated on the rainbowed throne,
Wilt thou take me as I am?
Wilt thou one so guilty own?

* Rev. v. 6.
† Rev. v. 12, 13.
‡ Rev. vi. 16.
§ Rev. vii. 9, 10, 14, 17.
‖ Rev. xii. 11.
¶ Rev. xxi. 23.
** Rev. xxii. 1.
†† Rev. xiv. 4.

Yes; it was for such as I
That thy precious blood was spilt:
Nothing brought thee here to die—
Nothing but our woe and guilt.

Shed it was: the purple tide
Flowed o'er Calvary's riven mount,—
Gushing from thy mangled side,
Filled the sin-atoning fount.

'Tis enough! No leprous spot
Meets Jehovah's piercing gaze:
All is pardoned — all forgot:
Saviour, take the endless praise.

Lo! the white-robed choirs arise;
Hark! I hear their lofty strain:
Join, my soul, the pealing skies;
Shout — THE LAMB FOR SINNERS SLAIN!

ENTY-FOURTH MEDITATION.

LIGHT.

: SAVIOUR is LIGHT; for "God is light, and
n is no darkness at all."* Sin is spiritual
ness; and when sin entered our world, it
is though the sun had set forever. If Adam,
me suppose, fell on the very day of his cre-
, his mind must have been filled with gloom,
he saw the material sun go down, and
the darkness of night prevailed. But he
l recognize in the sun's rising again a token
vine favor, and a figure of Him who was to
the name and character of the Sun of
eousness.

hat light is to the natural and sentient world,
ord Jesus Christ is to my soul. It is the
im of knowledge, whereby chiefly we be-
acquainted with the visible and material
ion. It is the lamp of Science, which directs

* 1 John i. 5.

candle — nay, the sun of his soul. The very heritage of thy people is described by the same emblem, being called "the inheritance of the saints in light," * for which they are meetened by walking with thee, O Lord, as "children of the light;" † and the same beautiful imagery is employed to represent the final state of thy redeemed and triumphant church, to whom it is said, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." ‡ O light of my soul, and light of thy church, when wilt thou say of the last of thy promises, "It is finished"?

Shine forth, shine forth, ETERNAL LIGHT!
And penetrate the heavy night
That presses down the soul;
The mysteries of thy grace unseal,
Thine own all-glorious self reveal,
And Satan's power control.

Shine forth, shine forth, ETERNAL DAY!
O, chase the shades of hell away,

* Col. i. 12. † 1 Thess. v. 5. ‡ Isa. lx. 19.

Where'er those shades prevail;
Again on Sion's hill arise,
And thence, from over Gentile skies,
Rend superstition's veil.

"Shine forth, shine forth, ETERNAL TRUTH!"
On hoary age — on blooming youth
Thy heavenly unction send;
On us, on all, arise and bring
Salvation on thy healing wing,
And bid our sorrows end.

Ah! what a flood of glory waits
The opening of thy Sion's gates,
To burst upon the world!
Then earth's long-captive tribes shall rise,
And Satan, blasted from the skies,
To deepest hell be hurled.

Light of the world! O hear the prayer
Of millions sinking in despair,
Around each idol shrine;
Send down thy Spirit from above,
Assist thy people's toil of love,
And prove the cause is thine.

TWENTY-FIFTH MEDITATION

LIFE.

My Saviour is Life. "With thee is the fountain of life." * All existence has its origin and maintenance in him. He is eminently the source and support of that wonderful principle of life which we know to be diffused through the vegetable, the animal, and the spiritual world. Life, in its highest sense, is a capacity to know, to love, to serve, and to enjoy God. The forfeiture of this life was the penalty of Adam's fall. Christ bought it back, by pouring out his soul unto death for his people; and it now emanates to them from him. He is the true tree of life, to which every believer may stretch out the hand of faith, and eat, and live forever. My Saviour presents himself to me as "the bread of life." † The grace he gives is "the water of life." ‡ His very words are life. § He is "the

* Ps. xxxvi. 9.
† John vi. 35.
‡ Rev. xxii. 17.
§ John vi. 63.

Prince of life,"* who voluntarily submitted to die, that he might become the resurrection and the life of souls "dead in trespasses and sins."

When my soul was lying in the wilderness, like an exposed infant, ready to perish,† my Saviour beheld and pitied me, and said, "Live." As at the first he "breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul,"‡ so the Lord imparted his quickening Spirit to my soul, and gave me a new principle of life, which he still sustains by the same Spirit, whereby I live unto him. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."§ My natural life is exposed to ten thousand contingencies, the least of which may destroy it as soon as my foot crushes the moth, or as the breeze breaks the bubble. That I live, as it regards the life of nature, is a constant miracle of Providence. That I live spiritually, is a greater miracle of grace, for which I am indebted to Him who is himself my life. Was that new life, which he hath given me, vested in myself, it would soon perish; but

* Acts iii. 15.
† Ezek. xvi. 6.
‡ Gen. ii. 7.
§ Rom. viii. 2.

in him it is far beyond the reach of violence or accident.

"He that hath the Son, hath life."* I have the Son, if he is my Saviour; and he is my Saviour, if, by faith, I have put my soul into his hands for salvation. The life he imparts by his Spirit — the life which I possess by my vital union with him — is the earnest of eternal life. If its infant movements are productive of so much joy to myself, and of such glory to God, what will be its full and undeclining maturity in the world to come? What will be the ever-flowing, ever-widening, ever-deepening of that river, whose fountain is now so bright, and the source of so much happiness? If, "to me, to live," even on earth, "is Christ," what will be the "gain" of death, when he shall be my whole life forever and ever!†

Dead to this world and all its joys,
I live, my God, to thee:
A brighter world my thought employs,
From earth's vain cares set free.

* 1 John v. 12. † Phil. i. 21.

The bonds that held me down before,
In sorrow, sin, and strife,
Confine my quickened soul no more,
Now raised to light and life.

That soul, on thee securely stayed,
My Saviour God, shall fear
No form of woe, nor death's dark shade,
Since thou, MY LIFE, art near.

Thus, rescued from the fowler's snare,
The lark expands her wings;
Then, soaring through the greeting air,
At heaven's bright portal sings.

TWENTY-SIXTH MEDITATION.

MEDIATOR.

My Saviour is the "one Mediator between God and men." * My carnal nature, in common with the whole of our fallen race, is at variance with God. Sin has separated me from him, and drawn over my head the naked sword of his offended justice, and the penalty of his violated law. When my soul first discovers this unsheathed weapon of righteous anger, I am filled with dismay, and am disposed to cry out, with Job, "I am afraid of all my sorrows; I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent. — For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment; neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hands upon us both." † But all my apprehension is removed, and hope and joy take the place of dread and grief in my heart, when

* 1 Tim. ii. 5. † Job ix. 28, 32, 33.

the Holy Ghost reveals the Lord Jesus Christ before me, in the plenitude of his mediatorial office. I behold him standing between me and God, fully commissioned and perfectly able to restore me to a state of reconciliation with him. He uplifts his own pierced hand against the raised arm of justice; and, pointing to his own scarred side, in which the sword of the law was plunged and satiated with atoning blood, he removes all ground of enmity and opposition, bringing back the Father's alienated love to my soul, and bringing back my prodigal soul to itself and the love of God.

My Saviour is the "one, the only Mediator between God and men." Saints and angels, who, by erring mortals, are daily approached under this name, and as filling this office, shrink back from the idolatrous homage, and would as soon dare to take possession of the throne of Deity itself, as assume the title and functions of Mediator. How could angels mediate for fallen man, who were able to accomplish nothing for their own fallen companions? How could the saints, — "the spirits of just men made perfect," — who are themselves indebted for all they have and are to the mediation of the Son of God?

Let my soul rejoice in Emanuel's all-sufficiency as "the Mediator of a better covenant, even the new covenant of grace, established upon better promises, and sealed with his own blood." * What can ever break a reconciliation so dearly bought, so effectually made, and so firmly secured? My Saviour will never withdraw from his mediatorial station before the throne, until the last soul, whom he has ransomed by his blood, shall be reinstated in the divine favor, and renewed after the divine image. Then his mediatorial office will cease; but the fruits of it will remain forever, in a perpetual revenue of glory and joy to himself, and of happiness to myself and happy millions more, who have partaken of the "reconciliation."

As the rock of the strand, in the face of dark ocean,
That shelters the harbor's calm basin of waves,
And within, from the storm, and the wild deep's commotion,
The bark of the mariner welcomes and saves,—

* Heb. viii. 6; xii. 24.

So my Saviour 'tween me and God's arm interposes,
And bears the dark wrath of the law on his breast;
And within, 'neath his shadow, a refuge discloses,
Where peace, like the halcyon, soothes me to rest.

Now the storm has subsided — now, cloudless, serene,
The face of the heavens smiles sweetly and bright;
For my God, as my reconciled Father, is seen
To own me for his, 'midst the children of light.

TWENTY-SEVENTH MEDITATION.

MESSIAH.

My Saviour is the Messiah, whom Daniel foretold, as "the Prince," who should "be cut off, but not for himself," "to finish the transgression, and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity." *

To accomplish these great purposes, it was necessary that my Saviour should be at once a Priest and a sacrifice, and in his sacerdotal character be "anointed" with an unction, corresponding with his exalted nature and his unequalled undertaking. That unction was the Holy Ghost, and it qualified him in his priestly office to "offer himself without spot to God;" † for it was "through the Eternal Spirit" that he thus presented himself unto God, by his conscience-purging blood. As the anointed prophet and teacher of his people, whose work and whose word were to

* Dan. ix. 24—26. † Heb. ix. 14.

be the source of instruction and comfort to them, under all the varied wants of their ignorance and their sorrows, he was the object of constant expectation. "I know," — said the woman of Samaria to him, before he fully revealed himself to her penitent and opening mind, — "I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things." *

In his regal office, also, my Saviour was anointed with the divine unction, which authorized and enabled him to assume the reins of universal empire. "Thus was Christ 'anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows;' i. e. above those who possessed with him a *fellowship*, or similarity of office, as types of himself. Aaron was anointed high-priest; Saul was anointed king; Elisha was anointed prophet; Melchisedec, king and priest; Moses, priest and prophet; David, king and prophet; yet none was ever anointed to the union and comprehension of all these offices together, but the CHRIST of GOD."

All that my Saviour has and is, he has and is for me. That "oil of gladness," which so richly flows over him, that "all his garments," and even the very skirts of them, "smell of myrrh,

* John iv. 25.

aloes, and cassia," descends upon me, and communicates its healing and sanctifying virtue to my soul, when my timid faith only ventures to touch the hem of his vesture. Whatever was touched by the anointed priest, became consecrated to the service of the sanctuary; and one drop of the precious anointing oil would perfume all it fell upon. Has not my Saviour touched my soul? Has he not secretly drawn me to touch him in humble faith? Have I not felt a sweetly-constraining energy emanate from him to my whole nature? Am not I, and all I have, thereby consecrated to my Redeemer's service? I observe it recorded of the members of the earliest New Testament church, when acting under that rich unction of the Holy One which taught them all things, that "not any of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own." Thus may I feel and act; so that men, perceiving the fragrance of holiness around me, while I am myself scarcely conscious of it, may "take knowledge of me that I have been with Jesus," and seek for themselves the same anointing of God. To him alone apostolical and sainted men were accustomed to ascribe the origin and glory of their devoted

lives. "Now, he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." *

As on the top of Hermon's snowy breast
The dewy clouds of heaven forever rest,
And thence, in showers, on every subject hill
Rich with fertility and life distil;
While fountains swell to streams, and streams expand
To rivers, that o'erflow the thirsty land;
Till pasture clothes the hills, and through the plains
Smile waving harvests of the golden grain;—
So on my Saviour, Prophet, Priest, and King,
The Holy Dove forever spreads his wing;
Sheds, as he hovers there, celestial dew,
An unction all divine, and ever new;
And down, in streams of rich anointing, pours
Life, holiness, and peace, on earth's remotest shores.

* 2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

TWENTY-EIGHTH MEDITATION.

NAME OF THE LORD.

My Saviour is the name of the Lord; for by this expressive title he is repeatedly spoken of in the page of truth. He is that glorious medium by which Jehovah makes himself and his purposes known to me, and by which I may approach him with my guilt for pardon, and my wants to be supplied. If I look for an appellation, which comprehends in it all the attributes of the Godhead, especially in relation to myself, I have but to look to Jesus, and his glorious person immediately reflects Jehovah's highest name.*

On "the name of the Lord," † therefore, let me call with the pilgrim patriarchs of the olden time. When my heart is sensible of my innumerable mercies, "I will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high." ‡ When sorrow would produce despondency, I will "remember the

* Ex. xxxiv. 5. † Gen. xii. 8; xxvi. 25. ‡ Ps. vii. 17.

ıme of the Lord our God;"* for he is that strong tower, into which the righteous runneth ıd is safe," † and whom the child of light, when r a time he walketh in darkness, is to "trust;" ‡ r we are well assured that no confidence can ı placed in any other under heaven.§ Hence ıly can my Saviour be said to have "a name hich is above every name," and to which every knee shall bow." ||

Behold thy Saviour, O my soul, on his white ırse of war and victory! On his head are many owns. His vesture is dipped in blood. The mies which are in heaven follow him upon hite horses, clothed in fine linen, white and ean. "He hath on his vesture and on his thigh name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF RDS." Art thou not almost overwhelmed by e consideration, that THIS is thy SAVIOUR, and at thou art to join his train?

O for that vision of my God,
Which favored Moses saw,
When Sinai's trembling heights he trod,
And heard the fiery law!

* Ps. xx. 7. ‡ Isa. l. 10. || Phil. ii. 10.
† Prov. xviii. 10. § Acts iv. 12.

This heart, this stubborn heart of stone,
Might melt beneath the flaming throne.

No; let me rather catch the sight
That moved before his eye,
When, vestured round with robes of light
Jehovah passed by:
He saw not, nor could see, his face,
But all his goodness — all his grace.

That glimpse, once caught, this stony heart
Shall break, and melt, and feel:
Saviour! that softening view impart,
And all thyself reveal:
I dare not meet the Godhead's flame;
I may behold Jehovah's NAME.

Jesus, in thee, as in the cleft
The gazing prophet stood,
I take my stand — of fear bereft,
Through thine atoning blood;
Thy glory — goodness — name, unite
To fill with joy my ravished sight.

TWENTY-NINTH MEDITATION.

PASSOVER.

My Saviour is my Passover; "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." * The Passover was, strictly speaking, that act of mercy whereby the Israelites were spared and saved, when the destroying angel, passing through the land of Egypt, destroyed the first-born of every family not redeemed by the blood of the appointed lamb. The name was afterwards given to the feast which commemorated that deliverance; subsequently, to the sacrifice, which afforded the feast; and ultimately, to the Lamb of God, as the great antitype, to which the redemption of Israel, the commemorative feast, and the atoning lamb pointed.

In the person of my Saviour I see my true Passover. "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter;" † meek and unopposing; spotless

* *1 Cor. v. 7.* † Isa. liii. 7.

and unblemished; taken, as it were, from the flock, as being of our own nature; and, like the lamb to be slain, which was taken from the flock four days before the day of sacrifice, devoting himself to his redeeming work in the fourth year before he suffered.*

I recognize my true Passover in my beloved Saviour's sufferings and death. Like the paschal lamb, he was slain "by the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel," who conspired his death. The sin of a whole guilty world raised that shout,—"Crucify him! Crucify him!"† The lamb was killed by the effusion of its blood, and was then roasted with fire, without the breaking of a bone. This latter feature in the type was fulfilled by the special providence of God, who restrained the Roman soldiers from their usual barbarity; and my soul mingles joy with my tears, while I ponder the atoning agonies of my Lord, when he voluntarily "poured out his soul unto death,"‡ deliberately letting fall, drop after drop, of his most precious blood, until enough had been shed; and patiently enduring the fiery wrath of divine justice,§ until, the smile of his

* Ex. xii.
† Luke xxiii. 21.
‡ Isa. liii. 12.
§ Ps. xxii. 14, 15.

Father's countenance returning, he knew that his atonement was accepted and finished. Moreover, the time and place of the typical and antitypical passover were the same, at least from the time of David, between noon and sunset, "in the place where the Lord chose to put his name."

My Saviour's blood is called "the blood of sprinkling," * because, being sprinkled on my guilty soul, as the lamb's blood on the door-posts of the Israelites, my sin is remitted, and the Angel of vengeance has no authority to smite me. I am safe. It was by faith that the Israelite obeyed the law of the paschal sacrifice, and received its promised benefits. By faith let me receive "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," † and all the rich results of his death.

Lo! with THY blood besprinkled o'er,
My heart presents an open door!
Come, King of glory, enter in!
No evil conscience here has place;
All purged by blood, and cleansed by grace,
Here lurks no soul-condemning sin.

* Heb. xii. 24. † Rom. viii. 2.

On THEE, my Paschal Lamb, I feed,
(Rich emblem of the grace I need!)
And eager faith receives thee whole:
An undivided sacrifice
Alone my hunger will suffice,
And ease the craving of my soul.

Yet still the briny tear shall flow;
I'll taste the luxury of woe,
In fellowship with thee, dear Lord!
Repentance — faith's first bitter leaf —
Mingles my cup with holy grief,
But sweetens mercy's welcome word.

Search me, O God, and try my heart;
Purge out all leaven from every part;
To me a full redemption give;
From sin and Satan's tyrant rod,
To walk in liberty with God,
And to my great Deliverer live.

Begirt with truth, in pilgrim guise,
I follow where my pathway lies,
Through foes or desert, flame or flood;
Immortal, till thy work is done,
Unwearied, till the prize is won —
The Canaan that was bought with blood.

THIRTIETH MEDITATION.

PHYSICIAN.

My Saviour is the Physician of my soul. All else, who may profess, or promise, or attempt to relieve or cure its maladies, "are physicians of no value." * Those maladies are too deeply seated for human remedies to reach. They have pervaded every part of the spiritual system, to an extent which defies all the efforts of created intelligence or benevolence to trace or remove. Some of the brute creation have a powerful instinct, which impels them to search out and eat an antidote to the poisonous wounds received from their foes. But we have no such antidote within our reach in nature; nor is reason in us so powerful as instinct in the brute.

My Saviour, "the beloved Physician," came "to restore that which he took not away," even the health of the diseased family of man. By

* Job xiii. 4.

submitting to death, he purchased for himself a diploma, authorizing him to become the Physician of our souls — to run in between the living and the dead, that he might stay the plague. Blessed Lord, thou appearest in the midst of this pestilential world, and, standing beside one and another of our dying souls, thou sayest, with a smile of love, which of itself inspires hope and confidence in thy undertaking, "I am the Lord that healeth thee!" * Thou hast, I believe, begun the cure of my soul, which I acknowledge to have been in as diseased a state as that of any sinner. Thou hast applied the healing leaves of the tree of life; † and through thy precious, atoning blood, and thy renovating Spirit, I find within me new life, and many delightful sensations of returning health, while I look joyfully onward to the completion of my cure, when, on entering thy heavenly abode, disease shall forever leave my spiritual frame, and I shall be saved, without the possibility of a relapse.

But I look round upon the church and upon the world, and there are moments when, forgetful of what the Lord has done for me, I am tempted to ask, "Is there no balm in Gilead?

* Ex. xv. 26. † Rev. xxii. 2.

is there no physician there? Why, then, is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?"* Yes; there are both; but unto both there exists an inveterate aversion, which constitutes the worst symptom of the malady. "The carnal mind is enmity against God," and would dash to the ground "the cup of salvation offered by a Saviour's pierced hand." Even this, however, shall yield to the skill and power of the great Physician. He says, "Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth."† Even the most dangerous cases of relapse are not beyond his art or his patience. "I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely."‡ His miracles of healing, performed on the bodies and minds of men, when he walked on earth, were both specimens of his authority and power, and types of his healing purposes towards the whole world. That world is yet to be the ample area of a city whose name shall be, "the Lord is there;"§ and "the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick."‖

* Jer. viii. 22. ‡ Hos. xiv. 4. ‖ Isa. xxxiii. 24.
† Jer. xxxiii. 6. § Ezek. xlviii. 35.

JESUS, my God, disease and pain,
With all their dire and ghastly train,
Are servants of thy wrath or love,
And at thy sovereign bidding move.

From the light ills of infant age,
Up to the plague's destructive rage,
They come and go at thy command,
True to the sceptre of thy hand.

Thou, too, hast potent balm to cure
The maladies our souls endure:
None, who to thee for healing come,
Are sent, unhealed, despairing, home.

Though covered o'er with leprous guilt,
Thou, Lord, canst cleanse me, if thou wilt;
O, let me hear thee say, "Be clean!"
No loathsome spot shall then be seen.

Physician of my fainting soul,
One word of thine shall make me whole;
One touch — one timid touch of thee,
Shall set my long-bound spirit free.

THIRTY-FIRST MEDITATION.

PRIEST.

My Saviour "abideth a Priest continually," * and therefore, "because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." † The sacerdotal office became necessary, as soon as divine mercy had appointed typical sacrifices; and it must have been filled, in the first place, by Adam. It then, probably, descended to the eldest of the family, as one of the rights of primogeniture, and formed a chief part of the dignity with which the patriarchal character was invested. In the person of Melchisedec, it was united with the regal dignity. During the period of Israel's bondage in Egypt, sacrifice seems to have been suspended, ‡ and faith was left without those visible symbols — those sacraments of religion, which have ever been an important help to its infirmity. When the great family of Abraham was emancipated and redeemed, God was pleased

* *Heb. vii. 3.* † Heb. vii. 24. ‡ Ex. v. 3.

to institute a permanent and exclusive priesthood, to be continued in the family of Aaron, until the true Melchisedec should come, under whom both the priesthood and the law should be changed.*

Still, my faith, even under the more glorious ministration of the gospel, is greatly aided by the illustrations of my Saviour's priestly office, afforded by that of the Aaronic priesthood. Like Aaron and his sons, our great High-Priest was anointed, but with a far more costly unction,—that of the Holy Ghost. All my oblations and services are offered and rendered acceptable unto God by the Lord Jesus, who stands before the heavenly mercy-seat, with the golden censer, filled with the rich incense of his own merits.† Once every year, the high-priest, in a white robe, entered the holy of holies with atoning blood, to expiate the sins of the people. I rejoice to know that my Saviour has entered the heaven of heavens once and forever with his own blood, in behalf of his people — in my behalf, invested with the glorious apparel of a spiritual body. Israel's was an annual and typical redemption. Mine is an actual and "eternal redemption."‡ In that great typical atonement,

* Heb. vii. 12. † Rev. viii. 3. ‡ Heb. ix. 12.

no other man participated than the officiating high-priest; and my Lord was *alone* in the grand atoning sacrifice of himself. The work was exclusively his, and not a particle of the glory shall be withheld from him.

O my soul, indulge thyself more frequently in the sweet and holy luxury of meditation upon the past and present work of thy "faithful"* and compassionate High-Priest,† who has undertaken for thee all that thou requirest to be done, to secure the irreversible remission of thy guilt, the acceptance of thy person, and thy safe passage through time into eternity, where, through him, thou wilt thyself be made "a king and a priest unto God."‡ Commit to him thy every care. Have recourse to him in every sorrow. Open to him every wound in thy heart. Candidly confess to him thy every sin. He knew the whole amount of thy guilt, when, in his own person of most exalted dignity, he laid the all-sufficient offering upon the altar of the cross. He then provided for all the possible and infinite necessities of souls, for whom he knew there could be no remission, without the shedding of blood.

* Heb. ii. 17. † Heb. iv. 15. ‡ Rev. i. 6.

Gone are Judea's priestly train, —
Her ark, her altars, and her shrine;
No bleating victims now are slain,
Where Zion's rocky summits shine:
'Tis silence — deathly silence all,
Round ruined Salem's ploughshared wall.

Yet there the wandering pilgrims weep,
Of Christian or of Jewish name;
For there beneath the crescent sleep
The ashes of that altar's flame,
Which faith's ten thousand offerings fed —
Where faith's unnumbered tears were shed.

But, lo! on yon sublimer height
An ampler, purer temple stands;
And see! within its courts of light,
A godlike form uplifts his hands:
My Saviour Priest is offering there
The incense of unceasing prayer.

With soft compassion touched, he knows,
For he has felt, the sinner's grief:
To all our doubts and all our woes
He promises and gives relief.
My soul, dismiss thy self-distracting fears;
Thy SAVIOUR PRIEST for thee in heaven appears.

THIRTY-SECOND MEDITATION.

PROPHET.

My Saviour is my Prophet, as well as my Priest and my King. This name, and the office attached to it, were sustained by a "goodly fellowship" of men, whom God raised up at different periods, for the benefit of the church, and for the warning of an ungodly world. They were inspired to foretell events beyond the limits of human sagacity to foresee, the fulfilment of which should constitute a series of standing miracles, coeval with the history of the world. They were also the appointed messengers of God on special errands; to establish the truth of which they were often endowed with miraculous powers. The prophets likewise filled the office of public instructors, and were consecrated to their employment by a peculiar anointing. They were types of my Saviour, teaching by words of wisdom, and by works of power.

But he is the great, the supreme, the abiding Prophet of his church, who, according to the prediction of Moses, was to be raised up from amongst the brethren of the Jewish family, to make a full disclosure of Jehovah's will, and to confirm and complete the system of revealed mercy.* It is my Saviour who prophesies in the "goodly fellowship of the prophets" — in "the glorious company of the apostles" — in the holy band of the evangelists — and in the consecrated host of evangelical teachers, given and promised to his church in every age, "even unto the end of the world." † He preached his own gospel by the lips of Old Testament seers; by his own lips, when he walked on earth; by his ministers, whom he commissioned to all nations.‡

Beloved Saviour! I thank thee for the benefits of thy prophetic spirit, which have flowed down to me through thy servants, the prophets. I adore thee, with unutterable gratitude, for the blessings of thine own personal instruction of my soul; for none can teach like thee. When I look merely to men, — uninspired, though faithful men, — whether as writers or as vocal expos-

* Deut. xviii. 15. † Matt. xxviii. 20.
‡ Isa. xi. 1, 2; lxi. 1. Luke iv. 21. Acts iii. 22.

tors of thy will, I am often perplexed. I desire o take Mary's seat. Here, O Lord, teach me, nd lead me into all truth. On thy lips, speak- ng to me in the soft whispers of thy Spirit, I vould hang, in childlike docility, expecting to earn more from thee in an hour, than from uman wisdom in the longest life. Be pleased o spread before me correct views of the pro- hetic page, that I may neither adopt the wild nterpretations of the fanatic, nor sink into in- redulous carelessness, with the skeptic. Diffuse he sound wisdom of thy whole truth through my oul, and manifest its influence and its veracity, y the miracles of thy grace, in my temper and fe.

GREAT PROPHET of thy church, 'tis thine
To break thy word's mysterious seal —
To touch with light each beaming line,
And all its glorious sense reveal.

My God! one lesson taught by thee
Transcends a thousand learned from men;
And now this blessed truth I see,
I'll never leave thy feet again.

THIRTY-THIRD MEDITATION.

REDEEMER.

My Saviour is my Redeemer. Job knew and applied to his own comfort and support the delightful import of a similar assurance. "I know that my Redeemer liveth," * or "is the living one." Well aware of the grandeur and immensity of the work of redemption, promised to be wrought out for man, believers of the earliest times expected no other to sustain the arduous office but Jehovah. They saw that it would "cost more to redeem their souls," than any created power or benevolence could pay, and that no one inferior to Him could pay down the incalculable cost. The Israelitish pilgrims, reflecting upon their temporal deliverance, and upon the spiritual redemption of which that was a type, "remembered that the High God was their Redeemer," † and reposed their trust in him when

* Job xix. 25. † Ps. lxxviii. 35.

fresh difficulties crossed their path. The essential divinity of the world's Redeemer was the frequent theme of Isaiah's enraptured strain. I may with great advantage and pleasure bring together the numerous passages of that illustrious prophet, that enforce this truth.*

Well, my soul, consider the nature of that redemption, which constitutes the "one thing needful," and see whether thy Saviour has not fully qualified himself to be thy Redeemer. "I am sold under sin." † I feel, I lament, I acknowledge the mournful fact of my whole nature's captivity to the three supreme slaveholders, — Satan, Sin, and the World. But I rejoice in the equally certain fact, that I am "bought with a price," ‡ — "redeemed without money." § The ransom is paid, acknowledged, and accepted as sufficient. Christ is himself both the ransomer and the ransom.‖ Do I mourn, as lying bound under the curse of the law? I wipe away my tears, when I perceive that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." ¶ When incipient faith begins to realize this truth,

* Isa. xli. 14; liv. 5; xliii. 14; xlvii. 4; lix. 20.
† Rom. vii. 14. ‡ 1 Cor. vi. 20.
§ Isa. lii. 3. ‖ Luke i. 68. 1 Tim. ii. 6. ¶ Gal. iii. 13.

then I begin to experience redemption as an exercise of power — as a display of delivering grace; sin is made to loosen, and let go its hold on the faculties and dispositions of my soul. My Redeemer puts forth and glorifies the energies of his Spirit within my breast. I feel that I am free, and that as a freed man I am sweetly constrained to choose the service of my deliverer. I am His, who hath purchased for me, and conferred upon me, "the glorious liberty of the children of God." * A part, indeed, and the largest part of this purchase is yet held in reversion for me, by his own faithful hand. But it is as sure as if it were already in my possession. In common with "the whole creation," I am "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body," the concluding act of our great salvation, when heaven itself, the forfeited, but now recovered inheritance of my perfected and glorified nature, shall be made forever mine.

Hence, to thy native hell, Despair; away!
Nor flap thy pinions near the realms of day:
Thy direful form may scare the demon host
With memory sad of bliss forever lost;

* Rom. viii. 21—23.

But terror thou hast none for souls redeemed,
Whose guilt is pardoned, and on whom hath gleamed,
Bright from the face of God, hope, joy, and peace,
And bade their fears of wrath forever cease.
Redeeming Saviour! gird thee on thy might,
And travel forth upon the wings of light.
Thy church awaits thine advent; waits to see
Thy grace omnipotent — her children free; —
Fallen Zion raised from where she sits forlorn,
The Christian's pity, and the Pagan's scorn; —
To see a world redeemed from Satan's rod,
Rise, and remember, and adore her God.
Redeemer, Lord, I look to thee for rest;
With faith inspire this timid, doubting breast;
There shed abroad thy love, thy peace, thy joy;
Let hope's full song my future days employ,
Till my whole nature, ransomed and complete,
Stands clothed in glory at thy Godhead's seat.

THIRTY-FOURTH MEDITATION.

REFINER.

My Saviour is the Refiner of my soul. My soul is a precious substance, originally created in the image of God, a type of his own pure and exalted nature, and very suitably compared to gold, the most precious of all metals—the standard of value, by which all earthly things are tried. "But how is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!" * My soul, naturally, is like gold thrown back into its native mine, and intermixed with the basest material. My Saviour has devoted himself, in the exercise of the severest self-denial, to the fiery labor of a refiner. "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Yea, by the power of his Spirit and his

* Lam. iv. 1.

judgments, he was to be himself "like a refiner's fire." *

But all the children of God are the spiritual sons of Levi, being made "priests unto God," by the blood of the Lamb; and, being destined to become vessels of honor in the heavenly sanctuary, they require that refining process through which my Saviour engages to bring them. Gold, in its native state, having much of earthy and stony material mixed with it, is first of all broken in pieces, even to powder; then placed in a crucible, with some foreign substance as a solvent, and melted in a fire of intense heat. Gold requires a greater heat for its fusion than any other metal. The refiner stands or sits beside the fire, to superintend the process, to regulate the heat, and to watch the completion of the work. The work is completed when all the foreign substances are consumed or removed, in the form of dross, and the gold, without the loss of a single grain, is rendered so pure, that *the refiner can see his own face reflected in the molten metal.*

My Saviour is pursuing a similar process with the souls, whom he values above gold, that he may employ them forever, to his own glory, in

* *Mal. iii. 2, 3. Isa. xlviii. 10.*

the temple above. By his holy word and Spirit he subjects my soul to a discipline which brings it into a state of contrition, or spiritual brokenness. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" * In this humble state he puts me and keeps me in the furnace of affliction, dissolving the stony parts of my nature, and separating its earthly and fleshly affections. He sits by and regulates the fire. His wisdom will not let it be too cool. His love will not allow it to exceed the necessary degree of heat. Of me, and of his church universal, he will in the issue say to his Father, "Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none." † At last, when affliction and the grave have instrumentally done their part, the divine Refiner will discern his own image, with its every feature, reflected in my refined and renewed nature, and will place me forever near him, to be the object of his complacency and delight. ‡

Then let the furnace burn one seven times more:
I shrink not from the test, if Thou art near,
My God! as once on proud Euphrates' shore,

* Jer. xxiii. 29. † John xviii. 9. ‡ Zech. xiii. 9.

When thy three saints, without a sigh or tear,
On Shinah's plain endured the tyrant's doom severe.

I know the gracious purpose of thy love,
Not to destroy, but only to refine;
To fit my spirit for thy courts above,
Where all the vessels of thy glory shine: —
Then welcome be the flame, if that bright lot is mine.

My bonds are all the loss I can sustain,
In sharp affliction's hottest, longest fires:
Well-purchased loss! — my soul's eternal gain!
Thus martyrs pressed the stake with fond desires,
And, in their meteor cars, flew to the heavenly choirs.

THIRTY-FIFTH MEDITATION.

REFUGE.

My Saviour is the Refuge of my soul. What fear is there to alarm me? From what danger have I to flee? As a sinner, I am guilty of the blood of my own soul, and of the blood of others. I have violated the law; and its avenger, justice, exclaims in my startled ear, "Thou shalt surely die." * My danger is eternal death, to which one stroke of God's righteous judgment may in a moment consign me. But, behold! the very hand that barred up lost paradise with the flaming sword, opens a refuge for my soul,—a place of unassailable security, whither I may flee and be safe. Of this, the six separated cities, in the land of Canaan, were beautifully figurative. The eye of faith saw written over their gates, "The eternal God is thy refuge!" † The way that leadeth to my city of refuge is so plain, that "the

* Gen. ii. 17. † Deut. xxxiii. 27.

wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." * The gate is open day and night, and none that flee to it are excluded.† Yea, "the Eternal God" is both my "refuge," and "the way," and "the door," and "the life," which I am to find there. ‡ He is my soul's refuge, in his righteousness and blood, from all the terrors of the law. No weapon can touch me — no sentence of condemnation can overtake me there.

Have I, then, fled to Christ "for refuge, to lay hold of the hope set before us in the gospel?" § I "have strong consolation," even the strongest. For all the present and all the promised blessings of salvation are assured to me by the oath and the power of Him "who cannot lie," and who cannot be eluded, or overcome, by the most crafty and the most powerful of my foes. The fugitive left the city of refuge when the high-priest died. But my High-Priest is "the Eternal God," and in him I am to spend a secure and blissful forever. When my Saviour has opened his bleeding side to receive me, and I by faith have entered, the world can present no aspect of temporal danger that need alarm me. This "refuge from the

* Isa. xxxv. 8.
† John vi. 37.
‡ John x. 9; xiv. 6.
§ Heb. vi. 18.

storm, and covert from the tempest" * of divine wrath, becomes my glad and ever sure resource in the day of this world's perils. In that dark day, Luther's song may be mine and theirs, who have to suffer with me.† When "the hail" of judgment "shall sweep away the refuge of lies,"‡ and leave its deluded victims to inevitable destruction, I shall be lodged in "God, the Rock of my refuge." § Others may dream of safety—I AM safe.

God is my Refuge and my strength,
In trouble's fearful hour;
His ready help displays at length
His mercy and his power.

What though the earth be moved and flee,
With all its mountain train,
And tremble 'midst the angry sea,
Or sink beneath the main?

What form of fear shall daunt my soul,
Or shake my steadfast mind?
Why should I dread the thunder's roll,
Or shrink before the wind?

* Isa. xxv. 4.
† Ps. xlvi.
‡ Isa. xxviii. 17.
§ Ps. xciv. 22.

My Refuge on the eternal hills,
The tempest's rage defies;
My God his word of love fulfils,—
My soul in safety lies.

THIRTY-SIXTH MEDITATION.

RESURRECTION.

My Saviour is "the Resurrection," * for he is "the life" of his redeemed. Now "the Son quickeneth whom he will," † from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. Has he thus quickened me? Am I conscious of a spiritual change, as great and decided in its kind, as would be the restoration of life to a corpse? Is there dwelling in me a new life? Do I enjoy a new existence, compared with which my former resembled death itself? It is because Christ has visited me as the resurrection of my soul. Over this "the second death shall have no power." United unto him, I may rejoicingly take up his own declaration, applying it to the happy resuscitation of my spirit,—"I am he that liveth;" for Christ is my resurrection and my life; "and

* John xi. 25. † John v. 21.

was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore." *

But my mortal part is to die. This curiously wrought frame is to be destroyed, either by the rude violence of sudden calamity, or by the slow decay of age or disease. Well, my Saviour has undergone the solemn dissolution of soul and body before me; and, though his "flesh saw no corruption," and mine is to see it, he has written on the awful portal, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" † With my dissolving dust there will lie in the grave's cold bosom a principle of life, which, at the voice of the Son of God, and under the breathing of that Spi which raised him from the dead, will hereafte germinate with immortality, and rise to expand into a tree of life, which shall wave its branches, like palms of victory, over conquered death, and the despoiled grave. "For this corruptible MUST put on incorruption." ‡ Why? Because my Saviour has redeemed it. He has made it a part of his own mystical body, every member, every particle of which, must partake of his immortality. He has risen, the head of that body; and no

* *Rev. i. 18.* † 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 53.

one, that belongs to him, can be left behind in a state lower than heaven and glory. Let my person become loathsome, as ever a living mass of dying flesh yet became, under the corrupting touch of disease — so loathsome, that even the tenderest of earthly friends may dread to approach me, and may pray for the hour when the grave shall close over me — faith may smile and triumph. For He, who is in his own person the source, the substance, the first-fruits, and the efficient cause of the resurrection, "shall change this vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." * In him I shall die — die blessed. The dead in him shall rise first, and meet him in the air, when he shall come to fill up the everlasting portion of them that are saved, and of them that perish. Be this, therefore, my supreme desire, "that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection," † by personal experience, as the resurrection of my renewed and reconstructed nature.

In thy furrow, darksome grave,
Low, beneath thy heavy clod, —
Deep, below the keel-ploughed wave,
Where no living foot hath trod, —

* Phil. iii. 21. † Phil. iii. 10.

Safe, though long forgotten, lie
Seeds of immortality.

They must live; like precious grain,
Starting into life and bloom;
They must rise, for "He must reign,"—
Jesus, who despoiled the tomb:—
He, the Resurrection, lives:
He the promised harvest gives.

See! the mighty Angel stands!
Hark! the resurrection blast!
Lo, the sickle in his hands
Reaps the harvest in at last:
Heaven is filled with glorious store,
Gathered to its golden floor.

O my soul! is Jesus thine,—
Thine, his resurrection power?
'Tis enough:—thy dust resign,
Till thy Lord's triumphant hour;
Vile and worthless as it is,
It shall share thy spirit's bliss.

THIRTY-SEVENTH MEDITATION.

RIGHTEOUSNESS.

My Saviour is my Righteousness. In the moral government of God there can be no compromise of justice — no relaxation of law. An intelligent and accountable agent must either be entitled to the divine favor, on the footing of obedience, or be obnoxious to the divine wrath, as being involved in guilt by transgression. I am a sinner, in the very constitution of my nature; and the whole tenor of my life has either run counter to the will of God, or has fallen short of its required perfection. Even that part of my conduct which has borne some semblance of righteousness, has been, throughout, defective; and an imperfect obedience can never satisfy a perfect law. Defect is sin. It requires atonement; and, in common with the whole aggregate of human guiltiness, it has found it in the death *of the* eternal Son of God. But this atonement

only exempts me from the punishment due to my sin. It gives me no title to acceptance with God, no assurance of his favor, and no prospect of future happiness. To have a claim on these, I must henceforth have my nature restored to a sinless state, and be placed in a new scene of probation, where I may perform a sinless obedience to the will of God; or I must obtain from him a dispensation of grace, as far beyond my reason to devise, as my moral condition to merit. This dispensation of grace meets me in the person and work of my adorable Saviour.

The prophets foretold my joy and my privilege: "Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength."* I have neither in myself. I have both in him, and to the highest perfection, even to the full amount of my necessities. By Jeremiah, the truth is stated, if possible, with yet greater force, when he predicts that the name of the Redeemer, and of his church, as being one with himself, shall be this: "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."† Having given me himself, his righteousness is mine. He made my sin his own, when he bore it "in his own body on the tree," — when "the Lord

* Isa. xlv. 24. † Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16.

laid on him the iniquities of us all." His righteousness, in all its merit, is as perfectly reckoned to my account, in the sight of God, as my sin, in all its demerit, in all its guilt, was reckoned to him. Divine justice dealt with him under the imputation of sin, that it might deal with me under the imputation of righteousness. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." * My Saviour, therefore, being my righteousness, I have a clear, indisputable, and unalterable title to the favor, the love, and the eternal enjoyment of God. If these are due to my Saviour, and possessed by him in their fulness, they equally belong to me as being invested with his merit — as being *in* him.† When my disimbodied soul enters the Lord's immediate presence, I shall be received with a smile of complacency, because, in welcoming me to the bosom of his love, he will welcome his own reflected image.

MY SAVIOUR, when thy law demands
Full satisfaction at my hands,
Faith points to thine atonement made,
And pleads thy full obedience paid.

* 2 Cor. v. 21. † Phil. iii. 9.

O God, thou art my righteousness —
A robe of light — a spotless dress;
Thyself my title to thy love,
And to my heritage above.

Guilt cannot fill my soul with dread,
When, thus attired, I lift my head:
Not angels have so high a claim
As sinners pardoned in thy name.

THIRTY-EIGHTH MEDITATION.

ROCK.

My Saviour is my Rock.* Beneath the shade afforded by lofty rocks, the inhabitants of Judea found refreshment during the noontide heat. In their deep recesses and caverns they sought refuge, when overtaken by the storm, or pursued by their enemies. On the solid basis of rocks they built their most durable habitations, their temple, and many of their cities. Their very sepulchres, the treasuries of their dead, were cavities made in the rocky sides of their valleys. Hence they regarded their rocks as emblems of strength, security, and durability.

With beautiful propriety, therefore, is my Saviour often called a Rock. Do I feel like the traveller, — wounded, stripped, faint, and, incapable of an effort to save himself, left to perish on the scorching sands? Christ appears as the

* Ps. xxviii. 1.

rock in the desert, extending a broad, cool shade around, and sending forth "rivers of living water." Let me look to him, longing for "the times of refreshing from his presence," * and thirsting for the "living water" of his grace. Conscious of my weakness and inability to come where I wish to be, let me cry, "Lead me" — bring me "to the rock that is higher than I." † I hear him say, "I will refresh you." He is the "spiritual rock" of which ancient Israel drank, and from which God still supplies his people. The bees of Judea often made their rich comb in the hollow of the rocks, to the refreshment of many a weary passenger. How sweet is the honey which flows out of "the rock of our salvation"! ‡

Does fear assail — does danger threaten me? I will resort to Christ, as David did to the strongholds of Engedi, looking through all temporal means of security to him. "Truly, my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock." § "My God is the rock of my refuge." ‖

I need a foundation for my eternal hopes.

* Acts iii. 19. ‡ Ps. lxxxi. 16; lxxxix. 26.
† Ps. lxi. 2. § Ps. lxii. 1, 2. ‖ Ps. xciv. 22.

Nothing but a rock will answer my purpose, since I build for eternity. I have this in my Saviour, who is the rock-basis of his church, against which the gates of hell are never to prevail. The hope built there "maketh not ashamed." Let it enlarge itself to the widest extent; and let it rise to the loftiest height that is sanctioned by the unlimited promises of God; and let it be assaulted by the greatest violence; — it cannot fail, for it is "founded upon a rock." *

Did the body of a Jewish believer repose in an excavated rock, "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life"? In Christ my body shall rest, secure of that blissful expectation.

Thrice blessed, therefore, is thy saint, O Lord; for "thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength," or "THE ROCK OF AGES." † I find in thee, my Saviour, *strength*, which can overbalance all the disadvantages of my own weakness, and all the violence of my enemies; *security*, which no craft or power of the foe can disturb; and a *durability*

* Matt. vii. 25. † Isa. xxvi. 4.

of bliss, which shall remain undiminished, when the mountain rocks shall melt in the fires of the judgment day.

As on fair Vaga's wave my sail
Sped blithesomely before the gale,
I glanced within a rock's cleft side,
Above the swelling of the tide,
Secure from ruthless school-boy's hand,
From foe by sea, or foe by land,—
I glanced within a rock's cleft breast,
A lonely, safely-sheltered nest.
There, as successive seasons go,
And tides alternate ebb and flow,
Full many a wing is trained for flight
In heaven's blue field — in heaven's broad light.
Within that silent, peaceful cave,
Ne'er bursts the storm, nor rolls the wave.
Thus, thus that riven ROCK within,
That ROCK OF AGES, cleft by sin,—
For sinners cleft — for sinful me,—
Dear Lord! I find security.
How safe, within thy pierced breast,
My spirit finds its welcome rest!
And smiles to see the flood roll by;
And smiles to hear the storm on high;
And plumes her wing, and tunes her strain,
To soar and sing in heaven's broad plain.

THIRTY-NINTH MEDITATION.

ROSE.

My Saviour condescendingly says of himself, "I am the rose of Sharon." * Our natural pleasures come to us through the medium of the senses. The exquisite delights which the soul that is betrothed to Christ derives from him, are constantly spoken of in language supplied by those senses. The sight, the hearing, the touch, the taste, and the smell, afford images to set forth the excellency of my Saviour.† Sharon was a region of the Holy Land, proverbial for its richness and fertility; and the luxuriance of its roses was much celebrated. Happy was the enlightened mind, which saw in every rose of that blooming land a visible type of the promised Redeemer!

The flower of loveliest hue and sweetest fragrance is a most apt emblem of my Saviour.

* Cant. ii. 1. † 1 John i. 1. Cant. ii. 1—3.

Let it always remind me of him, and be dear to me for his sake. The rose has its root in the earth; but its beautiful flower and its rich odor are always aspiring towards heaven; so my Saviour, the "truth, sprang out of the earth," * and, ascending to glory, diffused the fragrance of his merits through heaven and earth. The rose of Sharon, — the flower of the garden, — wherever it grew, betokened cultivation and fertility. Wherever Christ comes and abides, "the wilderness and the solitary place is glad; the desert rejoiceth, and blossoms as the rose. It blossoms abundantly, and rejoices even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon is given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." †

If I wear a rose in my bosom, it scents my whole person. Has the Saviour a place in my breast, — he communicates the fragrance of his merits to my soul, and his spirit fills the atmosphere through which I move, as it were, with the breath of heaven. Even in death the rose is sweet — passing sweet, and sweetens every place where it lies. Thus, the Rose of Sharon has

* *Ps. lxxxv. 11.* † Isa. xxxv. 1, 2.

given the fragrance of life to the very chambers of death and the grave, — to that wardrobe of the saints, where their material garments are to be laid up, until the morning of the resurrection, then to be brought forth beautiful and fresh, fit for the court of heaven.

Hast thou not, in the lone wood's shade,
Oft seen a lovely flower,
Pale, weak, and bending low its head,
Drenched by the thunder-shower?

Transplanted thence, and trained to grow
The sunny garden's pride,
How sweetly did its odors flow,
Diffused on every side!

Fair Sharon's Rose thus lonely grew
In scorned Galilee,
And fainted 'neath the gory dew
Of dark Gethsemane.

Now, by the Lord's right hand removed
To his own Paradise,
By all admired, adored, beloved,
Its fragrance fills the skies.

FORTIETH MEDITATION.

SANCTIFICATION.

My Saviour is my Sanctification; for he "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* One of these four cardinal privileges of my portion, as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, — "righteousness," or justification, — is *imputed* to me; the other three are *imparted* to me. "Righteousness," being the ground of my present acceptance with the Father, and the title to my future inheritance, is reckoned to my account in the book of God in full. "Wisdom, sanctification, and redemption," are bestowed on me progressively and occasionally, in the life that now is; and they will be given in their perfection in the life that is to come. By my Saviour's "righteousness," I am wholly and forever absolved from the guilt of sin, and made an heir

* 1 Cor. i. 30.

of eternal life; and by the sanctifying influence of his Holy Spirit, my nature undergoes a gradual change from evil to good.

Through my Redeemer I partake of sanctification in a threefold sense, by the threefold love of the "holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity." I am "sanctified by God the Father," * in the eternal purpose of his choice; he "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." † I am "sanctified in Christ Jesus;" ‡ being regarded in him, set apart for the divine glory, to be the object of God's complacent love, and the mirror of his perfections. This becomes my privilege, when by faith I am justified in the name of the Lord Jesus. I am "sanctified by the Holy Ghost," § in the commencement of his work upon my soul, by regeneration, and in its continuance, by the gradual implantation and cultivation of the spiritual and moral graces of Christianity.

My Saviour is made sanctification unto me, because I am indebted to him for all that is comprehended under the term. That I might be

* Jude 1. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 2.
† Eph. i. 5. § Rom. xv. 16.

consecrated and cleansed for use, as a vessel of honor, in the heavenly temple, was the end for which he gave himself up to the grand work of redeeming love. "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."* Faith in him and the word of his gospel are the chief instruments employed in the hallowing work; † and the blessed agent of that work is styled "the Spirit of Christ." Dear Son of God, I praise thee as much for the renewing and purifying grace of thy Spirit, as for the atonement of thy blood, and the merit of thy righteousness.

Holy Redeemer! born to save
Thy people from their sin,
Thy sanctifying grace I crave,
To make me clean within.

I would not, if I might, remain
Beneath the dark control
Of that which loosed the fiends of pain
Upon thy righteous soul.

O, crush the subtle serpent's head,
And tear it from my breast;

* *John xvii. 19.* † John xvii. Acts xxvi. 18.

Implant thy nature in its stead,
And soothe my heart to rest.

I would, dear Lord, be holy too—
Be more and more like thee,
Until thy glorious form I view,—
Thy full redemption see.

FORTY-FIRST MEDITATION.

SAVIOUR.

My Saviour! I must have praised him with all the powers of my mind; I must have loved him with all the affections of my soul, even if he had never assumed any other name than this. It includes every other. To be my Saviour, it was necessary that he should possess all those attributes, and accomplish all those undertakings, which his other titles ascribe to him. The possession of those attributes, and the performance of those undertakings, invest him with the full glory of the saving character, in which my soul delights to contemplate him.

The rescue of my soul from the wrath of God; its emancipation from the enslaved state in which it naturally lies to Satan; its deliverance from the dominion of its own sinful lusts; the resurrection of my body from the grave; and the investiture of my regenerated nature with immo-

tality, happiness, and glory, in the immediate presence of God, — this is salvation — this is the work of my Saviour. "Salvation belongeth unto Jehovah." *

The appellation of Saviour first occurs in David's eucharistic "song in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies." † The grateful saint accumulates strong terms, by which to express his gratitude; and, as the climax of them all, he exclaims, "My Saviour!" It was the crowning act of Israel's ingratitude, on their long pilgrimage, that "they forgot God their Saviour." ‡ The prophets sounded abroad this title of the approaching Redeemer, for the encouragement of expectant Jews and Gentiles. "He shall send them a Saviour, and a great one." § That they might place a full reliance on his power and grace, they were repeatedly informed of the nature and dignity of their approaching Messiah. He was to be at once "a man of sorrows" and the "mighty God." "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour." || Mary's faith contemplated the babe in her womb in this exalted character: — "My spirit hath rejoiced in

* Ps. iii. 8. † 2 Sam. xxii. 1—3.
‡ Ps. cvi. 21. § Isa. xix. 20. || Isa. xliii. 11.

God my Saviour."* It would have afforded no gladness to her soul — it would rather have filled her with unutterable grief, to be the virgin mother of the world's Redeemer, unless she had felt that she possessed in her own child her soul's eternal Saviour.

I hear the heavenly host proclaiming him as a Saviour to the shepherds; † the men of Samaria acknowledging him to be the Saviour of the world; ‡ and apostles going through that world to declare, that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." § My soul responds to the song of angels, to the acknowledgment of the Samaritans, and to the declaration of the apostles. I ask, I desire, I can trust no other than Him, whom, with patriarchs and prophets, with apostles and martyrs, with believers on earth and saints in heaven, I own and love, I adore and praise, as MY SAVIOUR.

Was there another sound that fell
Of song in heaven, or wail in hell,
When Gabriel flew thy name to tell,
O Jesus?

* *Luke i. 47.* † *Luke ii. 11.* ‡ *John iv. 42.* § *Acts iv. 12.*

The skies through all their mansions heard
That new, that sweet, mysterious word,
Now given to thee, their sovereign Lord,
O Jesus!

Then angels struck their lyres again,
And, flying round the golden plain,
They sung thy praise in loftier strain,
O Jesus!

Hell listened — paused — that once alone
Was ever pause from wailing known, —
Then uttered one deep, lengthened groan,
O Jesus!

Alas! the breathing of thy name
Fans high and higher their quenchless flame,
And fills their souls with wrath and shame,
O Jesus!

To man — to guilty man alone,
Love, angels never heard, was shown,
When thou didst leave thy glory's throne,
O Jesus!

This, then, my fainting soul shall cheer,
And this shall check my starting tear,
The music of thy name to hear,
O Jesus!

FORTY-SECOND MEDITATION.

SEED OF THE WOMAN.

My Saviour is the Seed of the Woman, whom Jehovah promised to our first parents, as the bruiser, the destroyer, of that dire serpent's head, by whom they had been drawn into sin and ruin. How often and how long, during their lengthened pilgrimage of nearly one thousand years, did Adam and Eve ponder those words of mercy, which conveyed to them and their posterity the promise of a Saviour! It is highly probable, that the brief text handed down to us was explained to them with sufficient clearness, to enable them to live by faith and hope in the promises. Abraham certainly knew more of Christ than is recorded of his knowledge. It was not necessary for our faith, that we should be informed of the whole of that revelation, on which his rested. He had the paradisiacal promise renewed and enlarged to him; and in

the view afforded him of the nature and extent of that promise, he "rejoiced to see the day of Christ; and he saw it, and was glad."*

The fulfilment of the prophecies adds great splendor to the day of Christ, and my faith rejoices in the contemplation of their literal accomplishment. My Saviour was, in a peculiar and exclusive sense, "the seed of the woman." To this Jehovah pointed forward the expectation of his people, by the mouths and pens of Isaiah, of Micah, and of Jeremiah. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." † This "new thing the Lord hath created in the earth." "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." ‡

How much wisdom and how much mercy may I discover in the way of giving a Saviour to man! He was to have the very nature that fell, and to receive it, untainted by sin, from a virgin daughter of the first transgressor. The promise itself was conveyed in the sentence passed upon the

* John viii. 56. † Isa. vii. 14. Mic. v. 3. Matt. i. 22.
‡ Gal. iv. 5.

tempter, as a righteous aggravation of his penalty; while it would thus recur with more force to the minds of the penitent offenders, than if it had been given immediately to themselves.

Adorable Saviour, by becoming the seed "of the woman," and assuming my nature in its spotless purity, thou hast made thyself "the Everlasting Father" of a spiritual and immortal family — of "a seed to serve thee," in a new and unfading paradise, where there is no tree, but the tree of life, and where no subtle tempter ever enters. Of this thy seed,* thou hadst a comprehensive and satisfying view, from that awful elevation of Mount Calvary. O that, when all shall be gathered round thee in the day of thy perfected glory, I may be numbered with the rejoicing offspring of thy love!

SEED of the Galilean maid,
Here strike the promised blow,
For, in this guilty bosom's shade,
Lies hid thy deadly foe;
O tread the lurking serpent down,
Then take and wear the victor's crown.

* Isa. liii. 10.

Ne'er shall he lift his crest again,
Nor coil within my breast,
When yonder paradise I gain,
In yonder mansions rest:
There no forbidden fruit allures;
The tree of life my soul secures.

FORTY-THIRD MEDITATION.

SERVANT.

My Saviour bears the name, and discharges the office, of a Servant. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold." * It is, indeed, a spectacle for the universe to behold and admire; and what ought to be the limit of my interest and my admiration in beholding the Son of God "making himself of no reputation, and taking upon him the form of a servant," † for my sake? He, who was, and is, and ever shall be, the Lord of all, on whose will ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels, through all their various ranks, wait in ready marshaled hosts, and, swifter than light, traverse creation to do his pleasure, — he condescended to the office of a servant, and even to the death of a slave, for the purpose of rescuing the vilest of slaves from the most cruel and degrading

* *Isa.* xlii. 1. † Phil. ii. 7.

me, laid me, as it were, upon his shoulder, and carried me back, rejoicing in the labor of his love. Whatever secondary means were employed in my recovery, and in my subsequent preservation, the strength, the skill, and the success, were his. In the work of my restoration, he had to lay down his own life, and thereby acquired the distinctive titles of the "Good Shepherd,"* —"the great Shepherd of the sheep." †

Prone to wander still, from the bias of my old corrupt nature, I continually exercise the patience and care of my Shepherd. There are times when, to humble and to prove me, he leaves me to myself, and in the pride, the folly, and the lusts of my heart, I again go astray. But his eye is upon me, and he suffers me not to go beyond the reach of his arm. "He restoreth my soul, and leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name sake." ‡ My wanderings bring shame and self-abasement upon me, and my recoveries glorify his free grace. I learn the more familiarly to know his voice and to follow him; and the more readily I hear and obey his call, the greater is my peace and enjoyment. For "He maketh me to lie down in

* John x. 11. † Heb. xiii. 20. ‡ Ps. xxiii. 3.

green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." * He makes liberal provision, by his Spirit, by his word, and his other means of grace, for the nourishment, and comfort, and the delight of my soul. When my infirmities are many, and my fears great, he as tenderly enters into every particular circumstance of my case, as if I were the only object of his pastoral care. "He gathereth the lambs with his arm, and carrieth them in his bosom, and gently leadeth those that are with young." † When the cloudy and dark day hangs over my path, and I feel dismayed at the perils which appear to surround me, my Saviour tells me to look away from my foes and my dangers to him. His assurance to his people is this,—"They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands." ‡ Under my own, or any other guidance, or in any other hands, I might, I must perish. But, now, death itself is to wear a new aspect, or, rather, is to disappear from the path, along which my Shepherd is conducting my soul. I "shall not see death," nor "taste" his mortal cup. Through the awful gloom of his dominion I must, indeed, pass; but the king of terrors trembles, when a

* *Ps. xxiii.* 2. † Isa. xl. 11. ‡ John x. 28.

believer comes near him, under the protecting arm of Him who has declared, "O death, I will be thy plagues." * All cause for dread is removed by the pardon of my sin, by the justification of my person, and the presence of my Redeemer. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." † His word of promise, like the pastoral crosier in the hand of the shepherd, will guide, strengthen, and support my soul, in its passage through the dark vale which lies between the foot of the mountain of human existence and the everlasting hills of "glory, honor, and immortality."

There is a fold, whence none can stray,
And pastures ever green,
Where sultry sun, or stormy day,
Or night is never seen.

Far up the everlasting hills,
In God's own light, it lies;
His smile its vast dimension fills
With joy that never dies.

* Hos. xiii. 14. † Ps. xxiii. 4.

One narrow vale, one darksome wave,
Divides that land from this:
I have a SHEPHERD, pledged to save,
And bear me home to bliss.

Soon at his feet my soul will lie,
In life's last struggling breath;
But I shall only seem to die,—
I shall not taste of death.

Far from this guilty world, to be
Exempt from toil and strife,
To spend eternity with thee,
My Saviour, this is LIFE!

FORTY-FIFTH MEDITATION.

SHIELD.

My Saviour is my Shield. He says to me what he said to the father of the faithful: "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield." * Abram was now in a very critical situation. By his successful enterprise against the hostile forces of four neighboring nations, he had acquired a new character, very different from that of the pastoral patriarch. His victory, and his rescue of Lot, had been, in good part, miraculous; and he had no sufficient reason to apprehend that the God who had thus wonderfully prospered him, would ever betray his confidence. But Abram, like all his spiritual children, found that it is much easier to "wrestle with flesh and blood," than to "fight the good fight of faith." After the excitement attendant upon victory had subsided, and the pleasure arising from the honor

* Gen. xv. 1.

he received at the hands of the king of Sodom, and from his remarkable interview with the mysterious king of Salem, had passed away, the father of the faithful seems to have felt some secret alarm at the position he occupied in the midst of warlike and powerful nations. God is fully aware of the most secret emotions of his people's minds. He observed the rising fear of his servant — his friend. The shades of night were round the patriarch's tent, when "the WORD of the Lord," the second person of the Trinity, vouchsafed to visit him, and allay his dread. He said enough, he said every thing, when he came to Abram in a vision, with this invigorating assurance: "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield."

The shield was a well-known piece of defensive armor, used in battle for self-protection, and absolutely necessary for every combatant. This at once covered his person from the weapons of his antagonists, and enabled him with greater security to use his own against them. The value of the shield, of course, depended upon the nature of its material. To be effectually serviceable, it must be impenetrable.

Every believer, like Abram, is in a hostile

land, surrounded by subtle, and malicious, and powerful enemies. If he looks to himself, he may well dread them. He recollects, and exclaims, "Mine enemies are lively, and they are strong; and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied." * They are, in fact, more numerous and more formidable than his timid imagination can picture to itself. But the incarnate Word says, "Fear not, child of faith; I know thy situation in all its bearings; I am perfectly aware of all that excites thine anxieties; and I have made provision against every emergency. Dismiss thy fears; 'I am thy shield.' I will cover thee in the hour of conflict. As no craft of thy foes can elude my vigilance and wisdom, so no force of theirs can pierce through the protection which I spread over thee. 'No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.' The weapon that reaches thee, must cut through thy shield. Can this ever happen, while I am thy shield?" † How appropriately did the departing lawgiver congratulate his people! "Happy art thou, O Israel!" said Moses; "who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help?" ‡

* *Ps.* xxxviii. 19. † Isa. liv. 17. ‡ Deut. xxxiii. 29.

Poor, unpardoned, unreconciled, unprotected sinner! thou art defenceless amidst the hosts of hell, all aiming their deadly shafts at thee. Child of God! thou art safe, and this may be thy song: "Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of my head." * "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth, and with my song will I praise him." † "Thou hast given me the shield of thy salvation." ‡ And he who is thy Shield will both secure thee through the conflict, and bestow on thee the crown. For "the Lord God is a sun and shield. The Lord will give grace and glory." § He encourages thee onward through the battle: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." ||

What fiery dart, by Satan hurled,
What weapon of this hostile world,
What secret stab of bosom sin, —
The foeman dire concealed within, —
Can ever, in the mortal strife,
Strike home, and pierce the seat of life,

* Ps. iii. 3. ‡ 2 Sam. xxii. 36. || Rev. ii. 10.
† *Ps. xxviii.* 7. § Ps. lxxxiv. 11.

While o'er me, through the battle-field,
Jehovah is my covering shield?
With his broad ægis thrown around,
Unmoved shall I maintain my ground:
Though all the fiends of hell combined
To harass and confound my mind,
Onward I press to grasp the crown,
Till death himself I trample down;
Then pass the portal of the sky,
And shout, — "To grace the victory!"

FORTY-SIXTH MEDITATION.

SON.

My Saviour is the Son of God, — "the only-begotten of the Father." Under this title I contemplate my Saviour, sustaining the highest relation to God the Father,* with whom he is One † in essence, but, by a generation which none can comprehend, distinct in person and in operation. In a form of glory which no created being ever wore, he was recognized by Nebuchadnezzar, and was undoubtedly known to his three faithful servants in the burning fiery furnace.‡ Is it one leading object of my petitions at the throne of grace, that I may obtain the brightest views of my Saviour's glory? Let me not be surprised, if he call me into the hottest fire of affliction, to meet him, and behold his glory.

David knew him by this name, and exhorted the kings and judges of the earth to render him

* *John i. 14.* † John x. 30. ‡ Dan. iii. 25.

the kiss of adoring and loyal homage, as their only security from the wrath to come.* A voice from heaven,† at his baptism, and at his transfiguration, proclaimed this high dignity of my Saviour; the very devils owned his claim;‡ his pharisaical enemies accused him of blasphemy, because he asserted this claim;§ and the wonders of his death extorted a confession of it from the Roman centurion.‖ The divinity of his Sonship was a prominent theme in the ministry of the apostles; and faith in this article of religion was made the very hinge of human salvation.¶

By his assumption of our nature, my Saviour also became "the Son of man," and bears this appellation nearly one hundred times in the sacred volume. Daniel beheld him invested with the form and sustaining the character of the Son of man, in his prophetical visions. By this title he is exhibited to my soul, by the evangelists, under all the most affecting circumstances of his history, from the time when he itinerated in the land of Israel, without a place where to lay his head, till he took his station at the right hand of God, in the united perfection of the

* Ps. ii. 12.
† Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5.
‡ Matt. viii. 29.
§ John xix. 7.
‖ Matt. xxvii. 54.
¶ 1 John iv. 15; v. 5—10.

Godhead and the humanity, fully qualified "to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." And now, through the completed work of his mediation, he bestows on his people a bright reflection of his own glory; for "to them that believe on his name he gives power, or authority, and a title to become the sons of God."* If, then, he is my Saviour, through faith in his name, I am as truly *a* son of God, and united to him as my Father, as the Lord Jesus is *the* Son of God. He has entered upon his inheritance, and therein I enjoy a pledge that I shall obtain mine.

I cannot lift my shrinking eye,
To meet, O God, thy piercing gaze:
To thickest shades, alarmed, I fly,
Nor dare the splendors of thy face,
Until, arrayed in grace and light,
Thy Son incarnate greets my sight.

In Jesus seen, my God is love;
The brightness of his glory brings
No terrors, while the Holy Dove
Sheds peace and pardon from his wings.
I now rejoice — admire — adore,
And cleave to him I shunned before.

* John i. 12.

FORTY-SEVENTH MEDITATION.

SUN.

My Saviour is "the Sun of Righteousness," who was to arise, and who did "arise with healing in his wings," * upon a world benighted under the threefold gloom of sin, and wrath, and oppression. There were but few awake from the slumber of death, that infolded in its arms the mass of mankind, to behold the brightness of its rising beams. They consisted only of those who feared Jehovah's name, and who were "waiting for the consolation of Israel," and "looked for redemption." He rose to set no more. He passed under a temporary eclipse, amidst the darkness of the day of Calvary; but he emerged from that gloom with augmented brightness; and his course is that of "the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." † When the natural sun has reached

* Mal. iv. 2. † Prov. iv. 18.

his meridian height, he covers the entire hemisphere with his effulgence. The innumerable forms of terrestrial things, which make up the surface of our globe, and are themselves dark and colorless, are now clothed with an endless variety of beauty. They are, as it were, invested with the greater light that rules the day. To this natural phenomenon there is a reference, in the Apocalyptic vision of "a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun." * In that emblem, St. John beheld the church, clothed with the righteousness of Christ — clothed with Christ himself, whom his people put on by faith, as their robe of light and glory. The church has no more righteousness of her own, either for justification or holiness, than the earth has of light or color. The natural and the spiritual world are each wholly and equally dependent upon their respective sun, for light, and life, and beauty. Of these, the material sun has been the exhaustless and undiminished source, ever since the creation. My Redeemer has also been the celestial fountain of illumination, spiritual vitality, and the beauty of holiness, to the souls of his people. "The Lord God," my Saviour, "is a

* Rev. xii. 1.

sun," * is *my* sun, my glory, my all. Even in the days of his humiliation, his face shone as the sun, "on the holy mount;" and St. John, who then beheld his glory, recognized it again, when he saw his beloved Master in the visions of Patmos. Let my soul rejoice in the certainty that, while my Saviour is my Sun, I cannot walk in darkness. Clouds may intervene; I may not always enjoy the light of his countenance; but enough light shall penetrate the thickest atmosphere of earth, to guide my steps towards heaven, — that heaven which has no need of any other sun than the Lamb.† Blessed Saviour, let the whole earth be filled with thy glory!

If all the glowing fires of heaven were one,
And poured their brightness into yonder sun,
One ray of pity from my Saviour's eye
Would pale those flaming splendors of the sky.

I ask no other lamp to guide my way
Through darkest night, or at meridian day;
In death's own shade, my Sun will give me light,
And put the hovering host of hell to flight.

* Ps. lxxiv. 11. † Rev. xxi. 23

FORTY-EIGHTH MEDITATION.

TRUTH.

My Saviour is the Truth. Not only did "grace and truth come by Jesus Christ," * but he asserted his own personal claim to this beautiful title, when he said, "I am the Truth." † The ceremonial law was a system of shadows, of which Christ was the substance. In themselves they had no virtue, and even no meaning. In reference to Christ, they were instructively typical. They became true only when they ended in him. At the time when my Saviour appeared amongst men, they were all entangled in the labyrinths of error. The most eminent teachers of the Gentile world were as much astray as the blinded crowds that followed them. The various systems of human philosophy, which pretended to the guidance of the human mind, were only like one ignis fatuus chasing another

* John i. 17. † John xiv. 6.

over the stagnant and pestilential morasses of universal ignorance. The Lord Jesus Christ came to reveal a perfect system of truth, of which he himself, in his person, character, and offices, is the sum and substance; and which is to restore man from the fatal and benighting effects of the fruit of the forbidden "tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

When Jesus was born at Bethlehem, the ancient oracle was fulfilled, — "Truth shall spring out of the earth," — and the multitudes of perishing souls, scattered over the world, "in wandering mazes lost," obtained an infallible Teacher and an almighty Deliverer. Thou art no longer, indeed, visible in thy church, but thou art present, gracious Lord. Thou hast given us thy word; and, like thyself, "thy word is truth." Thou hast promised even more than thou hast given us, though not more than thou art faithful and able to perform. With thy word thou hast left the promise of the Holy Ghost, in these sweet terms: "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." * Since, therefore, "thou hast redeemed me," and undertaken effectually to teach me, "O Lord

* John xvi. 13.

God of truth," * — since thou hast inclined me to choose "the way of truth," "O let thy truth continually preserve me," † and "send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacle." ‡ Then, whenever the question is started, by an inquirer, a caviller, or my own heart,— "What is truth?" I shall have this answer confidently to make: MY SAVIOUR is the TRUTH.

My ardent soul, in rising youth,
Or in declining age,
Shall turn to thee, ETERNAL TRUTH!
And ponder o'er thy page;
Where, full of wondering joy, I trace,
Reflected in the lines of grace,
The beaming glories of thy face;
And these my heart engage.

For who, that once thy voice has heard,
Thy perfect beauty seen,
Can list to error's siren word,
Or love her guileful mien?
O! never, never let me stray,
From thy safe guidance wiled away,
Till thou shalt all thy form display,
In glory's brighter scene.

* *Ps.* xxxi. 5. † Ps. xl. 11. ‡ Ps. xliii. 3.

FORTY-NINTH MEDITATION.

VINE.

My Saviour is "the true Vine."* The vine, even in our climate, is a beautiful object, for the richness of its fruit, the exuberance of its foliage, and the delicate tenacity of its tendrils, when it is well cultivated and carefully trained. It bears, however, a very humble comparison with the vines of more southern regions, and especially of the good land which the Lord gave to his ancient people. The vine of Eshcol,† one of whose clusters was a burden for two men, affords the most apt emblem of him who condescends to say of himself, "I am the true Vine."

God's former church was often compared to a "vine."‡ When he planted it, it was "the choicest vine;" but, when he "looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes." It degenerated, and became as "a

* John xv. 1. † Num. xiii. 23. ‡ Ps. lxxx. 8. Isa. v.

wild vine,"* whose fruit was "death;" or as "the vine of Sodom,"† which produced only bitter and useless grapes, — wine as bad, as deadly, as the poison of a serpent, — grapes which, though rich in appearance, were bitter as gall. Similar is every object of human dependence on earth. Jesus only is "the TRUE VINE."

His human nature resembled the plain, rough, and almost unsightly external appearance of the vine-stem; but, in his divine nature, he was higher than the heavens, and extended the influence of his refreshing shade over heaven and earth. This true Vine is "he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."‡ It shall "fill the land," — every land. "The hills shall be covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof shall be like goodly cedars," in the eyes of all nations, who shall repose in its cool shadow, and be nourished by its fruit. Of this vine only can the words of Jotham's fable be correct; for its wine alone "cheereth God and man;"§ Jesus being the supreme delight of his Father, and of his redeemed people. Here, indeed, is Judah's

* 2 Kings iv. 39.
† Deut. xxxii. 32.
‡ John iii. 13.
§ Judges ix. 13.

Vine, in whose "blood"* the garments of the Lord's ransomed are washed, — whose "blood is the life" of perishing souls. "Whoso drinketh my blood hath eternal life;" "for my blood is drink indeed." †

In Christ, every believer dwelleth safely, under his own vine, none daring to make him afraid, while faith is in due exercise." ‡ Our Lord says to his people, "Ye are the branches." If nominal Christians evince not a vital union with him, the pruning-knife will cut them off. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." It is not every graft that takes; and where a graft fails of a living connection with the stock, sooner or later it falls and perishes. § The branch that beareth fruit, owes its fertility to the tree. Thence it draws all the richness of its fruit — all its strength — all its beauty. So all the graces of the Christian character owe their origin and excellence to my Saviour, from whom the energy of the Holy Spirit flows into the soul, as sap from the stem into the branches. || Nor is the bearing branch left to itself; for it would soon luxuriate, till it

* Gen. xlix. 11. ‡ 1 Kings iv. 29. || John xv. 4, 5.
† John vi. 53—56. § John xv. 2—6.

produced nothing but leaves. It "is purged." The "true Vine" himself was made perfect through sufferings; and his branches are trained for corresponding fruitfulness and perfection, by a similar process. Let me, therefore, be anxious and watchful to maintain a close union and communion with my Saviour, whose charge is, "Abide in me," and who gives this great encouragement, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Am I one of even the smallest and lowest branches of the true Vine? Then shall I partake of "the glory that is to be revealed," when, planted on the everlasting hills, it shall overshadow the whole world, and my adoring soul shall exclaim, "Now heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory!"

Weary pilgrim, lift thine eye:
Downward through the yielding sky,
Lo! the Vine of Canaan bends,
Near the hand that faith extends;
Branches laden with such fruit
As thy parching thirst will suit:—
Fainting with the summer's heat,
Thou art welcome,—take and eat.

Nay, why dost thou trembling stand?
Why withhold thy timid hand?
'Tis no dream — this Vine is TRUE!
Taste, — the vintage is for you.
Merit! — 'tis an idle dream;
All thy merit, — need of Him:
Quicken, then, thy lingering feet:
Thou art welcome, — take and eat.

FIFTIETH MEDITATION.

WAY.

My Saviour tells me that he is "the Way." * By following the crooked paths of the great deceiver, "all flesh hath corrupted his way upon the earth," and departed far from the way of holiness and bliss. The miserable effect of this departure is felt through the whole course and circumstances of human existence; and particularly in an incessant craving after lost happiness, without a knowledge either of its nature or its means of attainment. To know, to serve, and to enjoy the favor of its God, is the creature's felicity. By restoring a perception of this truth, and by opening up a path to the recovery of this lost happiness, God has invested himself with the brightest of his robes of glory. This he promised, when, "at sundry times, and in divers ways, he spake in time past unto the fathers, by the

* John xiv. 6.

prophets." This he performed, when "in these last days he hath spoken unto us by his Son." *

Beloved Saviour, thou art the bright path by which millions of my race have returned home to God. By thee, by thee alone, do I desire to be restored. Thou art "the Way of truth," † for thy doctrine teaches me the only road to heaven. Thou art "the Way of salvation," ‡ for thou deliverest from the wrath to come. Thou art "the Way of righteousness;" § for "by thee all that believe are justified." Thou art "the Way of peace;" || for, being justified by faith, I have peace with God through thee. Thou art "the Way of holiness;" ¶ for, by the influence of thy Holy Spirit, thou makest me a new creature, and meetenest me for the inheritance, into which nothing that defileth can enter. Thou art "the Way of life;" ** for, by thine own death, thou hast redeemed my soul from the bitter pains of the second eternal death; and, by thy resurrection, hast opened for my body, through the grave, a gate of everlasting life. Yes, "thou wilt show me," thou hast shown

* Heb. i. 1.
† 2 Peter ii. 2.
‡ Acts xiv. 17.
§ 2 Peter ii. 21.
|| Luke i. 79.
¶ Isa. xxxv. 8.
** Ps. xvi. 11.

me, and wilt lead me along "the path of life," to "thy presence, where is fulness of joy; and to thy right hand, where are pleasures forevermore."

There is a path leads home to God;*
But who that path has seen?
No wandering foot that path has trod,
No wing that path has been:
It ne'er has met the vulture's eye,
Nor has the lion passed it by.

Ah! who can point it out to me,
Or tell me where 'tis found?
"Not here!" exclaims the roaring sea;
"Not here!" earth's deep profound!
The orbs of heaven in silence roll,
And leave in gloom the inquiring soul.

Not all the gold of eastern mines,
Nor jewels beyond price,
Where sapphire, pearl, and ruby shines,
Like stars that gem the skies,—
Could purchase wisdom's brighter ray,
To show, and guide me in that way.

* Job xxviii. 7—23.

Death and destruction, they have heard,
For they once crossed the path,
When man believed the tempter's word,
And dared the penal wrath;
But now they smile at human woe,
And urge us to the gulf below.

But, see! a light divides the gloom;
I hear a soothing voice:
Behold thy God! — thy bliss — thy home.
I AM THE WAY! rejoice!
Thy Saviour, thy unchanging Friend,
Shall teach and help thee to the end.

FIFTY-FIRST MEDITATION.

WORD.

My Saviour is "the Word of God." * The ancient Jews expected him under this name, and their prophets frequently applied it to him. The title is one of the Triune Deity's. Even the modern Jews, in their superstitious dread of pronouncing the sacred name Jehovah, substitute Memra, which signifies the Word.

My Saviour bears this name, as being the uncreated wisdom, or Reason of God, his own eternal Son, by whom he made the worlds, and still upholds them; and as being the divine and gracious medium, whereby he holds communion with the people, whom he has called and redeemed unto himself out of mankind. The title belongs to him, therefore, both in respect to his person and nature and in respect to his media-

* Rev. xix. 3.

torial office. With St. John, I behold the WORD in the beginning with God, and being himself God,* the Creator of all things. With Moses, I hear his voice in the holy oracle.† He is at once the word of Jehovah, and the WORD JEHOVAH. This divine and glorious "Word was made flesh,"‡ that he might render himself "the word of grace, to build me up, and give me an inheritance among all them which are sanctified;"§ and "the word of life,"‖ which I might hear, and live; which I might see, and rejoice in, as my sure guide to glory; which I might handle, as the staff of my pilgrimage; of which I might taste, and find it sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. "The written word testifies of Christ externally; he testifies of himself, and the Holy Spirit testifies of him by the written word internally." It is only when thus powerfully working in the soul, and revealing the glories of the GOD-MAN Christ Jesus, that the Scriptures are felt to be a revelation from God. Thus may the WORD JEHOVAH ever speak to my soul, with powerful effect, "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of

* John i. 1—3. ‡ John i. 14. ‖ 1 John i. 1.
† Num. vii. 89. § Acts xx. 32.

soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, as a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;" * and thus laying the whole of my nature on his own altar, and presenting me "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," † through the virtue of his own atonement. In this way, dear Lord, prepare me for that approaching spectacle, in which thou shalt be the principal object — the object every eye shall see, with unutterable joy, or wild dismay. "I saw heaven opened, and, behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called, THE WORD OF GOD. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his

* *Heb. iv. 12.* † Rom. xii. 1.

vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS." Let me *now* love and serve thee, O Jesus, as the revealed and the revealing WORD; I shall *then* welcome and follow thee in thy train, as the SOVEREIGN WORD.

THAT NAME! O write it here,
Dear Saviour, on my heart;
Then come thyself and read it there,
When heaven and earth depart.

My title this shall be,
To join thy white-robed train,
When humbled worlds shall bow the knee,
And thou alone shalt reign.

FIFTY-SECOND MEDITATION.

WONDERFUL.

My Saviour is "Wonderful." * Isaiah announced that he should be crowned with this, among a cluster of other diadems. When Christ, the blessed angel of the covenant, appeared to Manoah, he assumed this name, "Wonderful." † But Manoah, feeling like a true believer the weight of his sinfulness, and failing, like Peter, under a sense of the load, mistook his character, and feared that *because he had seen God*, he should *surely die.* Manoah confessed that he was God; but seems to have forgotten that he was God *the Saviour*, till his faithful wife reminded him of the gracious promises, which this Saviour left behind for their consolation.

My mind is attracted by any surprising occurrence, either in or out of the course of nature.

* *Isa. ix. 6.* † Judges xiii. 18.

Whatever is unusual excites my attention, and, in proportion to its novelty, my astonishment. Whatever is curious and beautiful in art, lovely or magnificent in creation, impresses and captivates my mind. But in my Saviour, beauty and sublimity reach their acme; and it is only because my spiritual sensibilities are blunted by sin, that I am not absorbed in admiration whenever I sit down to meditate upon any name, or word, or work of Emanuel. Do I gaze in awe upon the attributes of his proper Deity, or in love upon the perfections of his humanity? Do I contemplate the works he wrought, or the sufferings he endured; the wisdom of his doctrines, or the unblemished purity of his obedience; the tenderness of his compassion, or the infinite merit of his expiation for sin? What is the point of view in which he does not appear wonderful? He is the wonder of angels, who look down into these things from heaven; and the wonder of devils, who survey them from hell with astonishment, envy, and hatred. He sustains this character in the stupendous plans of providence and grace, and in all the subordinate plans, which affect the church and individual souls. To *me* he appears most wonderful in the dispensations which have

ruled over my own history, and which are uniting to accomplish my salvation.

If I feel thus, when I now meditate upon one, or, in succession, upon all, of the names, and works, and sufferings of my Saviour, what will be my emotions when I shall have an eye to see, and a soul to comprehend, all his glorious perfections and ways? All may perhaps be swallowed up in this: "Thy love to me was wonderful," * in that Thou shouldst design, and even delight — nay, more, even glory to become my WONDERFUL SAVIOUR.

When all these WONDROUS NAMES I view,
Like diadems of light,
Or gems of every form and hue,
That charm the ravished sight,
I ask, enchained with sweet surprise,
Is this a dream illudes mine eyes,
Or meteor gleams that vainly rise,
Then leave my soul in night?

Ah! no; far more than seraphs see,
Who gaze with folded wing,
My precious Saviour is to me, —
And more than verse can sing.

* 2 Sam. i. 26.

Yet, all his wondrous names disclose,
Her *own* my happy spirit knows,
To calm her fears and soothe her woes,
And full salvation bring.

Ere long, transported to the scene
Where saints before him fall,
Where sins nor sorrows intervene,
To dim the eye's bright ball,—
With every shining crown arrayed,
Partaker of his glory made,
Exulting I shall see displayed
MY SAVIOUR ALL IN ALL.